

CHRISTIAN SEVENTH
To the Old and New
SABBATARIANS

OR,
A Vindication of our Gospel-Festivals.

Wherein is held forth,

- I. That The Feast of Christs Nativity is grounded upon the Scriptures, was Observed in the pure, ancient, Apostolique times, and is approved by all Reformed Churches.
- II. That Christ was born on the 25 day of December; and all Objections to the contrary refuted.
- III. That the keeping holy the Lords-Day was appointed by the Christian Church; and that the Morality, and Divine Institution of the Lords-Day are meer fictions.
- IV. That the Day of Christs Nativity, the Day of his Passion, and the like, have equall Authority, equall Antiquity, equall right to be observed as the Lords Day; and that to work on those Days is equally sinful.
- V. That the Observation of the Sabbath Day is abolished in Christ; and that to call the Lords Day the Sabbath is senseless, Jewish, unchristian, unwarrantable.

TOGETHER WITH

*Questions preparatory to the better, free,
and more Christian Administration of
the Lords Supper.*

By EDWARD FISHER, Esq.

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CHRISTIAN CAVERN

SABBATHS

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To all that love the Lord Jesus, and his
T R U T H,
 Grace, Health, and Hapinesse, be
 multiplied.

BRETHREN,



Mongst those wholesome and heavenly duties recommended in the New Testament, there is none more earnestly pressed upon us, then our Duty of Trying and Examining the Doctrines, even of those who profess themselves Teachers, Prophets, Ministers of Christ: Take heede What

you hear (a); Prove all things, hold fast that which is good (b); Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of GOD; For many false prophets are gone out into the world, saith S. John (c) False teachers there shall be, saith S. Peter (d) False prophets shall arise, and deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect; but take heed; behold, I have foretold you all things, saith our Blessed Saviour (e). And indeed, from the neglect of these Divine Warnings, and the taking up of doctrines, proofes, as on trust without examination, it is, that so many Heresies, Sects, Factions, and perverse Opinions have taken root, and sprung up amongst us: Hence so much Zeale without knowledge (f); so much Lecturing and Learning without profiting (g); so much siding (h), and having mens persons in admiration (i); so much toying in judgement, and sailing with every wind of Doctrine, which way soever their Teachers please; inso much as an experienced Minister hath long since testified, We finde (saith he) the spirits of the people of this Kingdom (ESPECIALLY of the City, and the parts adjacent) that profess or pretend, to the power of Godliness, ready to take ANY impressions, and to be cast into ANY mould that hath but the appearance of a stricter way (k).

a) Mat. 4. 24.
 b) 1 Thes. 5. 21.
 c) 1 John 4. 1.
 d) 2 Pet. 2. 1.

e) Mark 13. 32.
 23.

f) Rom. 10. 2.
 g) 2 Tim. 3. 7.
 h) 1 Cor. 3. 3.
 i) Jude 16.

k) Edwards his
 Antipologia. p.
 pag. 209.

A 2.

NOW

Now, that our Examinations may proceed upon clear and infallible grounds, we must know, that the *Rule* and *Mark* of Truth, is not the composed looks, and outward sanctity of the Teacher; for even *false prophets shall come to you* (saith *Christ*) in *sheeps clothing* (l); and we read of *Arius*, *Polagius*, and divers others, who though notorious Hereticks, yet to the eye of the world were men of unblameable Conversations, and outwardly Religious: Nor is it smooth and faire language; for, *through covetousnesse shall the False Teachers*, (saith *S. Peter*) use flatterring, and *fained words* (m): But the sure and alone stedfast *Rule* of Truth is the most Sacred word of *GOD* (n); unto which all Teachers must submit (o), and by which all Doctrines must be tryed, and examined, not with a bare turning over the leaves of the Bible, and finding out the Scripture words, (as some think it is all they have to doe) but through a *diligent inquiry and search* (p) into the sense and meaning of *GOD*'s holy spirit; like as the *Bereans* in the *Acts*, who, though they received the word with all readiness of mind, yet they searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so, as *Paul* preached (q).

l) Mat. 7. 15.

m) 2 Pet. 2. 3.

n) Gal. 6. 16.

Phil. 3. 16.

o) John 5. 39.

1 Cor. 10. 15.

p) 1 Pet. 1. 10.

q) Acts 17. 11.

r) *Extant prodigiosa disputationes de mutatione sabbati, quæ omnes ortæ sunt ex falsa persuasione, quod oporteat, in Ecclesia cultum esse similem Levitico. Vide Confess. August. in Append. ad Harm. Confessi.*

f) Exod. 23. 2.

According then to this Rule let the following Treatise be examined; let those great and *prodigious* (r) Disputes concerning *ses dayes and times to GOD*'s publique Service be brought to this touch-stone of Truth, *GOD*'s Holy Word; Let us trie, let us search what is by all parties delivered, and whatsoever is founded on, or agreeable to the Divine Truth, embrace we must; whatsoever is swarving from, or repugnant thereunto, retaine we may not; though it come backed with a *multitude* (s) and be upheld by the highest of worldly powers. In order therefore to the right understanding of this Controversie, we shall set downe in brief, what is *Truth*, and what is *Error*, that by comparing them together, they may (as colours that be directly opposite) render each other the more discernable.

And first, Most evident it is, that from the creation of *Adams*, unto the time of *Moses*, the Scriptures, but in one onely place, have mentioned *GOD*'s setting apart a day to his Service; and that is the second of *Genesis*, ver. 2, 3. where it is said, That *God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made*, and FOR THAT CAUSE *blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it*. But when this blessing and sanctification first was, or to whom first enjoyed

enjoyed, the Text expresseth not, and men speak wholly by conjectures, wherein it becometh every one to use his owne judgement with modesty, and not to obtrude it upon others for an infallible and certain truth.

Nextly, from the time of *Moses* to our Saviours Passion, it is undeniable, that the Jewish Church had her weekly Feasts on the seventh day; (r) her monthly Feasts (u) her yearly Feasts; (w) and all of them by GODS own prescription and appointment, all of them Feasts of the Lord, Sabbaths of the Lord, holy Convocations, wherein no servile work might be done. (x)

But after our Saviours Passion, the Apostles both by their practise and doctrine have witnessed, that GOD under the Gospell does not exact one day for his publique service, more then another; *The observing a day and not observing a day, are as meat and drink* (y) which in themselves (z) are things indifferent: And it is a part of that Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, (a) to make choyce of the dayes and times for GODS services, as well publique as private. Hence it is that the Apostles doe so sharply condemn, not onely the observance of Jewish Festivals, Sabbaths, and Ceremonies; (b) but also of any other dayes and times, as things absolutely necessary; terming such observances of dayes weak and beggarly elements, the yoke of bondage, (c) the rudiments of the world, (d)

Upon this ground therefore of Christian Liberty the most pure, ancient, and Apostolicall Churches tooke up and ordained the observation of such dayes, as to each Church, seemed most convenient for GODS service. (e) Which dayes were either Weekly, or Anniversary. (f) For the Weekly; some Churches did observe onely the first day of the week or Sunday, which they named also the Lords day, in memory of our Lords Resurrection; (g) Some did observe onely Friday, in memory of Christs Passion; (h) some observed the Sabbath onely (i) some observed both the Sabbath and Sunday. (k) some both Wednesday, and Friday, (l) some both Friday and Sunday, (m) some Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. (n) As for the Anniversary dayes which were celebrated but once in the year; Those of generall concernment and highest esteeme, were the day of Christs Nativity, (o) with us called Christmas day; The day of Christs suffering on the Crosse, p with us called Good-Friday; The day of his Rising againe from the dead,

r Exod. 16. 33.
25, 26. 33.
Levit. 23. 2, 3.
u Num. 28. 11.
w Exod. 12. 3.
x 18. 24. Lev. 23. 5
15. 24 27. 34 39
y Read Levit.
ch. 13. through-
out.
z Rom. 14. v. 2.
6. some with v. 17
r Rom. 14. 14.
a Gal. 5. 1.
b Acts 15. 10.
Col. 2. 16, 17.
c Gal. 4. 9. & 5. 4
d Col. 2. 10.
e Acts and Mo-
numents, vol. 1.
fol. 26. n. 60. &
fol. 57. n. 30.
f Zaneb. in 4.
Precept. de
dieb. Fest. Quæst
1. Vide etiam
Libellum, cui ti-
tulus est, Dies
Dominical. l. 1.
c. 7. p. 111.
g Justin. Mar-
tyr. Apol. 2. pro
Christianis.
h Sozom. l. 7.
c. 16.
i Socrat. lib. 5.
c. 21.
k Ignat. Ep.
ad Magnesianos.
l Soc. l. 5. c. 21.
m Euseb. de
vita Constant.
l. 4. c. 18. Sozo-
men l. 1. c. 8.
n Hieronym.
l. 2. in Galat. c. 4
o Lu. 2. 6. 7. 11
p Mark. 15. 42.

g) Luke 24.1.6. *dead*, (g) with us called *Easter-day*: The day of his *Ascension* *unto heaven*, (r) with us called *Holy Thursday*; the day of Christ his *sending downe the Holy Ghost*, (s) with us called *Whitsunday*. And here it will be expedient to take notice of three things worthy our remembrance: First, that the most ancient Records and Histories of the Church doe mention the observing of the Lords day, and those Anniversary dayes aforementioned, but *not the time when Christians began to keep them holy*: (c) And therefore to affirm that the Lords day was solemnized before the day of Christs *Nativity*, *Passion*, and the rest, is no other then a bare assertion without booke. (u) Secondly, admit the Lords day were the first Christian Festivall; yet cannot that day by such precedency of time (a thing meere circumstantiall) be the more obligatory to us, since the Anniversary dayes were instituted by the *same* authority, upon the *same* ground, to the *same* end. (w) Thirdly, from the time of the Apostles unto the reign of Constantine the Great, the Christian Churches enjoyed; and stilly maintained (x) their severall customes in the free observation of dayes to GODS publique service: But, *when* Constantine had gotten possession of the whole Roman Empire, (y) and was become (as it were) Lord of the World, none must then presume to vary from his judgement and practice; and about the yeere of salvation 324. (z) his Imperiall Decree, or Edict went forth, commanding all within his Dominions to reverence and set apart the Lords day to divine duties and that all Magistrates and Rulers whatsoever should see it performed: (a) After which Decree, partly through feare of punishment, partly allured by the example of the Emperour and his Successours, (which experience teacheth us to be very attractive) (b) the Christian people did by degrees let fall the observation of other daies, and so the Lords day became the alone weekly Festivall, as we see it in our time. Howbeit observable it is, that the said Decree of Constantine, is as clear and full for the strict and reverent celebration of the Anniversary Feasts, as of the Lords day. The words of the Decree are, *That all who are subject to the Roman Empire, should rest from all labour on the dayes entitiled by our Saviours Name, and should reverence them, for the memory of those things which were done on those dayes by the common Saviour of us all.* (c)

Thus we have shewed what is Truth: we come now unto Er-

YOUR,

e) Euseb. dist.
loc.

r) Magdeburg.
Cent. 1. l. 2 c. 6.

u) As Monkes
doth in his
scurrilous illite-
rate pamphlet
called;
Christmas, the
Christians grand
Feast. p. 7. 15.

w) This pro-
ved in our An-
swer to Master
Ios. Hemings
ninth Quære.

x) Euseb. l. 5,
cap. 22.

y) Sozom. l. 1.
cap. 8.

z) Fun. Com-
ments in Chronol.
lib 6.

a) Euseb. de vita
Constant. l. 4.
c. 18. & 23.

b) Regis ad ex-
emplum totius
componitur or-
bis.

your, which (according to the old saying) is manifold; (d) but the most remarkable opinions, or rather phantasies, are three. The first is, of the old Sabbatarians, who teach, that the keeping of the Sabbath or seventh day of the week, namely Satterday, is a duty Morall and Naturall, and so obliging all men at all times. (e) To prove this they bring us two Reasons; one is, *Because the Sabbath was appointed by GOD, and observed by Adam in Paradise.* But here unto we answer; First, with Tertullian, let them shew us that Adam, or Abel, or Enoch, or Noah, or any of the Patriarchs did ever keep the Sabbath. (f) Secondly, Every appointment or command of GOD to Adam in the state of Innocency was not Morall; for if so, then GODS command of *not eating the forbidden fruit* (g) should be Morall and binding to us, which were grosse to affirm. Thirdly; We read that *Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day*: (h) that immediately after their creation, they were placed in the garden of *Eden*, (i) and that in the cool or evening (k) of the day, GOD walked in the garden, called unto Adam; arraigned both him and her for *eating of the forbidden fruit*, and presently cast them out of Paradise, (l) so that Adam was neither in innocency nor in Paradise on the seventh day. (m) THEIR other Reason for the Morality of the Sabbath is, *Because the observation thereof was delivered in Mount Sinai, and enjoyned by the fourth commandment.* Unto which we answer; First, that all the words which GOD spake at the delivery of the Law in Mount Sinai were not Morall; For these words in the Preface, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, (n) cannot (in a literall sense, according as they were spoken) be applied to any other people then the Jewes. Secondly, if all the words spoken by God in Mount Sinai were Morall, then why is not the fifteenth ver. of the fifth chapter of *Deuteronomy*, inserted into our Copies of the *Decalogue*, seeing Moses testifieth, that the Lord spake those words in the Mount, (o) as well as the rest? Thirdly, upon a due and serious consideration of the words commonly refuted within the fourth Commandment, we shall find, that they contain in them a double Precept; The one *Generall*, the other *Speciall*. The *Generall* Precept is, *Remember the Sabbath, or rest day to keep it holy*: (p) Wherein foure things are required. First, there must be a set day or time for GODS service. Secondly, that day must be a day of rest, from our ordinary labour. Thirdly,

d) Error all multiple x.

e) See J. Ockfords doctrine of the fourth Commandment.

f) Doctant Adam Sabbatizasse, aut Abel, aut Enoch, &c.

Tertul. advers. Iudaos. cap. 20

g) Gen. 2. 17.

h) Gen. 1. 27: 28. 31.

i) Compare Gen. 2. 15. 17. with Gen. 3. 3.

k) Varab. in Gen. 3. 8.

l) Gen. 3. 8, 9. 11. 2. 23. 24.

m) Willet bk six-fold Com. on Gen. 6. 3-9. 31.

n) Exo 1. 10. 2.

o) Deut. 5. 12.

p) Exod. 12. 8.

ly,

q Rom. 7. 19. 10
 r Nisi certis sta-
 tutisque tempori-
 bus, ad res divi-
 nis administran-
 das utamur, po-
 pulus in incerto
 positus nunquam
 convenire pote-
 rit, ut audiat
 verbum domini.
 Func. Com. in
 Chro. l. 6. An-
 Chr. 324.
 f Exod. 29. 10,
 11.
 † Col. 2. 16.
 u Calvin. l. 2.
 institut. c. 8. sect.
 31. 32. Bullin-
 ger. Decad. 2.
 Serm. 4. De *Deum*
 Ethic. Christi-
 an l. 2. c. 10.
 Zanch. in expl.
 Precept. 4. Ur-
 sin. Catechet. 9.
 103. Polan.
 smag. Theol.
 l. 6. c. 10. Du
 Moulin in his
 Treatise of Tra-
 ditions c. 10.
 Doctor Pride-
 aux his Lect. of
 the Sab. sect. 3.
 Carpenters
 Geography. l. 1.
 c. 11. p. 238,
 239.
 w Heb. 9. 10:
 x Balduin de
 Cas. Consuet.
 l. 2. c. 13. Casl.
 y Sect. 2.

ly, it must be kept holy, that is, spent in the worship of GOD and divine exercises. Fourthly, we must remember, both to have such dayes and observe them. And that this Precept is Morall and Natural the very light of reason hath evidenced unto all men: For, from the view of this glorious fabrick of the world, from the admirable beauty, order, and variety of things therein, from terrour of conscience in evill doing, and many other wayes, the most savage people are convinced there is a GOD; (g) And if a GOD, then he must be served, because on him is our dependency; And if served, then there must be a day or times set apart for his service, otherwise men being upon uncertainties can never assemble; (r) And if there be a day or time set apart for his service, then must we rest on that day from our owne worke, otherwise we mock GOD in pretending a day unto him, and taking it to our selves; And if we rest from our own work, then we must employ our selves in holy duties, else the day is not so properly a day of rest as a day of idlenesse, which reason condemnes. THE Speciall Precept is, *Six dayes shalt thou labour &c.* (s) And herein not any glimpse or shadow of Morallity appeareth: For, that GOD created the World in six dayes, rested the seventh, hallowed it, and allowed six dayes for labour, it was meerely of his Divine will and pleasure; There was nothing in nature, nothing in reason, but that GOD might have finished the Creation in six minutes, as well as six dayes; nor is the seventh day in nature more holy, but that GOD might have appointed any other day as well as that. Wherefore we conclude with St. Paul, that the observation of the Sabbath or seventh day was Ceremoniall, (t) not Morall; and by consequence, this Precept was a part of the Ceremoniall Law, (u) abrogated in Christ, (w) and is now justly set aside by all Christian Churches.

The second Opinion is, of the Anabaptists and Libertines, who teach, *That all set dayes and times to GODS Service are unlawfull.* (x) But this is directly against the fourth Commandement: and as for their reasons, such as they be, you have them brought forth, and confuted in the following Treatise (y).

The third Opinion is, of the new Sabbatarians, who dream of a middle way betwixt a Jew and a Christian; and this they usually lay down in two Propositions. The first is, *That the Lords Day, or first day of the weeke, namely Sunday, may be called the Sabbath:* The next is, *That the Observation of the Lords Day is a*

Morall

Morall duty enjoyned by GOD himselfe, and declared both by the doctrine, and practice of Christ, and his Apostles (a). The first appearance of this kinde of Teachers was in the yeare of our Lord 1595 (b), near the end of the Reiga of Queen Elizabeth: And because they are neither able to produce direct Scripture, nor solid reason for what they say, they labour to support their conceits by fallacies, falsities, and wrerings of GOD's Holy Word, as upon scanning their proofs will be manifest to the meaneest capacity. For their first proposition; they alledge two Reasons why the Lords day may be called *the Sabbath*: One is, *Because the Sabbath signifies a rest*; and therefore the Lords day being a rest, may be called the Sabbath. * But to this we answer, it is false that the Sabbath signifies a Rest; For when by Custome of speech a common name is restrained to a particular place, thing, or person, it then becomes a proper name, and so losing its community, does signifie that only particular, unto which by custom of speech it is applyed; as for instance, the temple is a common name signifying the Church; yet in London where by customs of speech this name, *The Temple*, is restrained to an Inns of Court, it is false, and absurd to say you were at *The Temple*, and mean the Church of Saint Giles: In like manner the Sabbath is a common name signifying the rest; yet in the Christian Church, where by custome of speech (c) (according to GOD's holy Phrase throughout the Old and New Testament (d) this name, *The Sabbath*, is restrained to the Jew. sh weekly Festival, it is false and absurd to speak of *The Sabbath*, and mean *The Lords Day*. Their other reason, why the Lords Day may be called *The Sabbath*, is, *Because the Lords Day succeeded in the room of the Sabbath*. But if this Argument be good, then may Baptisme be called Circumcision, the Lords Supper the Passover, and King James Queen Elizabeth. As for the second Proposition, wherein they asserre the Morality, and Divine institution of the Lords Day, their Reasons are at large debated in the following Treatise, * and therefore we shall here take notice onely of three. The first is, *Because (say they) Adams, according to GODS command kept the Sabbath in the State of innocency* (e). But this allegation is false; for, (as we have proved before) Adams fell on the sixth day; and our new Sabbatarians

ned by R. T. p. 283. Dies Dominica, i. e. 8. Du Baras, in the seventh day of the first Week.

B

them.

a) See, *The Practice of Piety*. Doctor Young in his *Dies Dominica*. Doctor Twisse, Walker, Ley, Sheppard, Nicholas and Richard Byfield, Marindale, Abbot, in their Treatises of the Sabbath. Scudder in his *Christians daily Walk*, &c.
b) See Rogers Preface to his Treatise upon the 39. Articles * *Ley Sunday a Sabbath*, c. 13. p. 79.

c) *Christianis erat solenne abstinere a vocabulis apud Judaeos in usu; ideo raro leguntur vocabulum Sabbathi usurpasse.* Dies Dominical. i. c. 5.
d) *Ley Sunday a Sabbath*, p. 14. & 161.
* See our Answer to Master Ios. Hemings 9th. *Quare*.
e) *The Practice of Piety*, Princi

themselves upon second thoughts have published, That the likeliest opinion to be true, is, That man fell the first day of his Creation: Which is (say they) the more probable, because if Adam and Eve had lodged in Paradise one night, his first child had not been begotten in his owne likeness, that is, in the state of corruption into which he fell (f). Besides, what is the sanctification of the Sabbath spoken of by Moses in the second Chapter of Genesis, to our observing the Lords day? That was appointed to be kept on the seventh and last day of the week; this is kept on the first day of the week: That was the day in which GOD rested from his Work of Creation (g); This is the day in which GOD began to create the heaven and the earth (h): That was our Saturday; This is our Sunday. THEIR second proof for the Morality of the Lords Day is, from the fourth Commandement; where they seek to corrupt the very Text, and would perswade us that for TH^e seventh day we must read *A seventh day*; (i) as if GOD did not there set apart a certain day of the week, but left it to man to keep which of the seven he pleased. Unto which we answer, that this conceit is not only against the letter of all our Translations, but even repugnant to the sense of the Commandement; For the words are expresse, that GOD blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day, that sabbath day was the seventh day, that seventh day was the day in which GOD rested from his sixe dayes Work of Creation. (k) Nay, grant it were true (as these men would have) that this Special Precept does exactly oblige us, & that no particular day of the seventh was by GOD appointed to be kept holy; then may we set apart Munday or Tuesday, or any other day to GODS service, as well as Sunday; & so by their own argument, the Lords day is no more Morall then any other day of the week. THEIR third proofe is from the title or name Lords day, which (say they) cannot be for any other reason, but because it is of the Lords institution. (l) We answer, this is false; For the Lords day is not so called, because it was instituted by the Lord, but because it is dedicated to the Lord; as we commonly say, Saint Maries Church, or Saint Peters Church; which no man did ever imagine, were built or founded by Saint Mary, or Saint Peter.

And now, Brethren, Ye that love the Lord Jesus and his truth, know, that for your sakes these things are written; and be ye exhorted seriously to weigh & consider the premises with the following

f) The Aⁿ
tembl. Annot.
on Gen. c. 3. v.
24.

g) Gen. 2. 2.
h) Gen. 1. 5.

i) The Practice
of Piety, Printed
by R. T. p. 269.
R. Byfield,
Doctrine of the
Sabbath. p. 116.
117.

k) Compare
Exod. 20. 10.
11. with Gen.
2. 2, 3.

l) R. Byf. 11.
Doctrine of the
Sabbath. p. 123.
Dies Dominica.
l. 1 c. 5. p. 24.

lowing Treatise. Give not heed to seducing Spirits and doctrines of devils, who command to abstain from meats, (m) which GOD hath created to be received of them which believe, and know the truth. (n) Dayes there must be to GODS service, and certainly, it is more worthy of praise, and more profitable to sanctifie those which the ancient, Apostolique, and purer Church did also accustometo sanctifie. (o) Wherefore let us keep to the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein; (p) and whensoever opportunity shall be given, let us all as men of one heart, and one soul, (q) humbly Petition the Thrice-High, (r) and Thrice-Honourable (s) Court of PARLIAMENT, to take these points into debate, and by AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STRICT AND DUE OBSERVATION OF THOSE ANNI-VERSARY FEASTS WHICH ARE ENTITLED BY OUR SAVIOURS NAME: So shall the Customes and Honour of the ancient, pure & Apostolick Churches be preserved; the solemn dayes for GODS worship be encreased; the charge of inconstancy, & sickleness in our profession be disproved; the fear of falling into Atheism be suppressed; the Jewish and superstitious esteeme of the Lords day be abated; our Christian liberty maintained; the mindes and consciences of the most, and best part of this Nation be satisfied; our Vowes and Declarations of Reforming according to the word of GOD, and the example of the best Reformed Churches be performed: And, blessed, yea blessed for ever shall they be that wise well to Sion, and build up the walls of Jerusalem.

(m) Holy dayes
are as meat or
drink. Col. 2.16.
(n) 1 Tim. 4.1, 3
(o) Zanch. in
precept de diebus
Festis. q. 2.
Thes. 2.
The Feasts, of
Christs Nativ-
ity, of Easter, of
Whitsontide,
&c. are Consi-
derations of the
ancient primi-
tive Church.
R Byfield, in
his Doctrin
of the Sabbath.
p. 134.
p) Jer. 6.16.
q) Acts 4.32.
r) Crompt. Ju-
risd. of Courts.
p. 1. 2.
f) Plowden.
Com. fol. 383.

Halelu. Jah.

A CHRISTIAN CAVEAT TO THE Old and New SABBATARIANS.

SECTION I.

The Occasion and Method of this Treatise.

EVer since the establishment of an uniformity of Doctrine (a) and Publick Service in the Church of England, (b) many zealous and godly Ministers have from time to time greatly bewailed the increase of Sectaries. (c) Queen Elizabeth, finding that no admonitions nor threats could silence their bitter and envenomed tongues, was forced to (d) banish them; King James, after a judicious and patient bearing of their weak and slender objections, (e) enjoyed them to conform, and by Ecclesiasticall censures restrained the disobedient. (f)

But now, it is strange to conceive, what liberty they take unto themselves; What tempests of railing and disgraces they heap upon those who cross their fustianesse with constant vindications, & assertions of the true doctrine of faith & life: where-by they verifie that of S. Paul, (g) Evil men and seducers shall waxe worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

It makes me (saith a noted divine) * to pity this great and famous City, when I behold a COLLUVIES, A VERY RABBLE OF ALL OPINIONS, and such a going and coming, touching as, and sayings off from the land of our righteousness, one weeke this is a truth, and almost an Article; the next

a) Anno Dom. 1582.

3. Eliz.

b) See the Acts before the Common-Prayer book.

c) Ecclesiasticall union, Pag. 4, 5, 14. Rogers Articles in the Preface.

The Epistle of the Translat. of the Bible to K. James.

d) Anno Dom. 1593. April 10.

e) See the Conference at Hampton Court.

f) Proclam. 5. Mart. 1603. Proclam. 16. Jul. 1604.

g) 1 Tim. 3. 13.

* Obad. Sedgwick, in his Treasure, entitled, Christs counsell to his languishing Church of Sardis, pag. 229, 230.

b) 1 Pet. 2. 16.

c) *Permissens recta
perversis; ut osten-
dendo bona, auditores
ad se trahant: &
exhibendo mala, la-
tente cor: pisse cor-
rumpant.* Greg. Mag.
Moral. l. 5. c. 17.

Error per seipsum
non ostenditur, ne de-
nudatus deprehenda-
tur, Irenæus adver-
sus Hæret. in Proœnio.

d) Protestation pro-
tested, pag. 8.

e) See Mr. Spelsber-
ries true Subject of
Baptisme.

f) The Anatomy of
the Service-booke.

pag. 23, 13, 17,
25, 26.

g) Protestation pro-
tested, pag. 7.

h) Protest. ibidem,
Smectymnus, Sect. 2.

i) Exod. 15. 1.

1 Chron. 16. 7. unto
verse 37. Psal. 44. &
8. 5. & 92. & 102. as
appeareth by the ti-
tles of those Psalmes.

Joel 2. 17. Luk. 11. 2.

Just Mart. Apol. 2.

Tertul. advers. gentes,

c. 39. Euseb. de vit.

Con. l. 4. c. 18. pag.

306. Calv. ad protest.

Angl. ep. 87. Muscul. in Psal. 65.

The booke of Hom. Tom. 2. Hom. 9 pag. 138.

Dr. Preston

in his Sermon styled, *The Saints daily exercise.*

(k) *Salmarsh his Examinat. of Mr. Fullers Ser-*

mon, pag. 2. (l) *A survey of Gods Couz. Devot. in the Epist. Ded.*

(m) Gal. 4, 29: (n) See

Mr. Smiths Treatise, called, *Gods Arrows against Atheists.* Chap. ult.

week it is no such matter, but some other thing is the right. And truly, what else can be expected, whilst men doe use their liberty, not as the servants of God, but for a cloak of maliciousnesse; (b) intermixing and sowing the tares of error and division with the seeds of truth and peace? (c)

Take a talt of their new, fiery-new Divinity. They say, that the Church of England hath not the Sacraments duly administered, nor the Word truly preached, and so want the marks of a true Church. (d) They deny the Baptisme of Infants to be lawfull. (e) They call the Liturgie and Publick service of our Church rank Atheisme, a proud inveigling strumpet, a cursed Masse of superstition, full of serpents, bathed in the blood of bolies, souls, and estates; the reliques or leavings of the Popish drags; not the stump or limb, but the head of the Dragon, no better then the conjuring or juggling of Magicians: (f) The Character of Antichrist or Antichristianisme. (g) They say that a set forme of Publique Prayer is a main branch of Popery: (h) yet we find that set formes of Prayer have ever been used and approved in Gods Church. (i) They say, that the thirty nine Articles of our Church are stuffed with Popery and Arminianisme: (k) and they have so vilified the booke of Homilies, that the very name of them is unto the vulgar become contemptible. Whence it is too too evident (let them make what pretence they please) that their aime is to confound and root out our Religion. For (as Mr. Prynn hath well observed) the whole body of our Religion is included in our Common-Prayer Booke, our Articles, and our Homilies. (l)

No marvail then, if THEY refuse to celebrate the Nativity of Christ; who (by their own confessions) have revolted from the Church of Christ; who disgrace, hate, slander, and persecute (m) the most Orthodox, the most eminent, and chiefest of all the Reformed Churches, the Church of England. (n) No marvaile, if THEY revive those old, rotten

errors of the PETROBRUSIANS (d), (affirming, that Christians ought not to keep or observe Feasts) who have a long time endeavoured to bring in all manner of Heresies and Schismes. and consequently *Atheisme*, which in milder speech is called *Libertinisme* (e). No marvaile, if they reject the tradition of our Church touching the day of our Saviours Nativity, who dare wilfully and impiously reject (f) that most absolute, most excellent, most Divine (g) Prayer; which, Gods word recordeth (h), was taught the Disciples even by our Saviour himselfe.

Now for the perfect discovery of the perversnesse, grosse mistakes, and ignorance of these men; and also for the full and cleare vindication of our Church from this foule aspersion of maintaining a *superstitious Novelty* (i); we shall set down these two Positions.

quas impias novitates, etiam et nos (Ecclesiz Anglicanz filios) conatur arguere, quod aliquod novum dicamus. August. de verb. Apost. Serm. 14.

d) In vita Bernard. l. 3. c. 5.

e) Videl. de Arcan. Armin l. 1. c. 1.

f) The Lords Prayer pleading for better entertainment, p. 28.

g) Divino plane artificio constans. Pola. Synt. Theol. l. 9. cap.

17. See also Bishop Latimers 1. & 2. Serm. on the Lords prayer.

h) Luke 11. 2.

i) Quia isti dissimulatio et disputatio nescio

1. That Christian Magistrates may lawfully constitute and ordaine Feast-dayes or dayes of solemne Thanksgiving; and require Obedience unto such Constitutions.

2. That the Church of *England* doth upon just & good grounds celebrate the NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, on the 25. day of *Decemb.*

In the discussing of the latter Position, we shall shew;

1. The severall names and titles of this Feast.

2. That

2. That the *Feast of the Nativity* is grounded upon the Scriptures.
3. That this Feast was duly Celebrated by the Christians in all ages.
4. That our Saviour was borne on the 25. day of *December*.
5. The worke of the day.

After which, we shall (God willing) conclude with a patheticall exhortation unto the true sonnes of the Church of England.

SECTION II.

That Christian Magistrates may lawfully constitute and ordain Feast-daies, or daies of solemn Thanksgiving, and require obedience unto such Constitutions.

THe truth of the former part of this Position (to wit, That *Christian Magistrates may lawfully constitute and ordaine Feast-daies*) is cleared by foure reasons.

THE FIRST Reason. *They that by Gods Word have power to limit things indifferent, may lawfully constitute Feast-daies.* Because Feast-daies are in themselves things indifferent, as *S. Paul* testifieth (†) *He that regardeth a day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.*

But *Christian Magistrates by Gods word have power to limit things indifferent.* (*) For the power given unto Magistrates by Gods Word, (a) is not over such things as are precisely commanded or forbidden by God (b).

Therefore *Christian Magistrates may lawfully constitute Feast-daies.*

† Rom. 14. 6.

* 1 Cor. 14. 40.

Res adiaphora sunt quæ

2 DE O, nec præ-

cepta, nec vetita sunt.

Polan. Syntag Theol.

lib. 6. c. 38. Becan. loc. com. 33. sect. 13. & 15. (a) Mat. 17. 27. & chap. 22. 21. Rom. 13.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Heb. 13. 17. 1 Pet. 2. 17. (b) Præcepta humana sunt determinationes cir-

cumstantiarum necessariae & utiles ad servanda præcepta monita prima vel secunda Tabula. Ursin.

explicat. Catechet. part 3. quest. 96.

THE SECOND Reason. *They that set apart speciall times to meditate on the goodnesse of God in Christ Jesus,*
and

and to render thanks for the same, doe that which is lawfull (c).

Festorum veteris Testamenti genus, quod morale et naturale est; abrogatum in novo non est, ut neminum homo deperiret aliquod tempus vitæ suæ ad vacandum Divinis; sed species tantum, quatenus festis illa expresso mandato Dei ad certas circumstantias temporum determinata et alligata erant, sub peccato mortali et poena damnationis. Hospin. de orig. fest. Christian. c. 1.

But Christian Magistrates when they constitute Feast-dayes, set apart speciall times to meditate on the goodnesse of God in Christ Jesus, and to render thanks for the same (d),

Therefore Christian Magistrates when they constitute Feast-dayes, doe that which is lawfull.

THE THIRD Reason. In time of Gods extraordinary Judgements upon a Nation, Christian Magistrates may lawfully constitute extraordinary daies of solemn mourning, or Fast-daies (e).

Therefore (by the rule of contraries) in times of Gods extraordinary blessing upon a Nation, Christian Magistrates may lawfully constitute extraordinary dayes of solemn thanksgiving, or Feast-dayes.

THE FOURTH Reason. That which may be lawfully observed, may be lawfully ordained.

But Feast daies may be lawfully observed. For our Saviour kept not onely the legall Feasts (f); but the feast of Dedication (g) which Judas Maccabæus instituted (h). The Apostles also observed Feast-daies (i); and Saint Paul saith, That he hastened if it were possible for him to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost (k). And in another place, I must by all means keep this Feast that commeth in Jerusalem (l).

Therefore Feast-daies may be lawfully ordained.

Seeing then that Christian Magistrates may justly and lawfully constitute Feast daies, it followes undeniably that they may require obedience unto such constitutions: for they are the Ministers of God, and beare not the sword in vaine (m). Yea we must needs be subject, not onely for wrath, but also for Conscience sake. Men are bound by God in their Consciences (saith

C

Amesius)

c) Mr. Perkins
Comment. on the
Galatians c. 1. v. 14.

d) Polan. Synag.
Theol. l. 5. c. 35.
Willets Synopl. in the
9. generall controversy,
lic. quæst. 7. p. 494.
495. & quæst. 8. p.
506. Fulk. annot. Apoc.
pocalyp. 1. sect. 6.
The Pract. of Piety,
printed by R. Y. pag.
364.

e) Judg. 10. 26:
1 Sam. 7. 6. 2 Chron.
20. 3. Ezra 8. 21, 22,
23. Neh. 9. 1. 36, 37.
Hest. 4. 3. Joel 2. 12.
15. Mat. 6. 16, 17, 18.
1 Cor. 7. 5.

f) John 10. 13. 23.
& 5. 1. & 12. 14.
g) John 10. 22, 23.
h) 1 Maccab. 4. 59.
i) Acts 2. 1. 1 Cor.
16. 8.

k) Acts 20. 16.
l) Ἐγὼ δεῖνα πᾶντος.
Acts 18. 21.

b) *Ad istas leges
omnesque iuste modo
observandas obligantur
homines in conscientia sub à Deo. Anti. cal. cons. lib. 3. cap. 2. (b) Marum legum obedientia necessa-
rio praestatur, nec sine offensione Dei negligitur propter ipsum mandatum Magistratum. Urbin. explicat.
Catechet. quæst. 96.*

Amesius) to observe the just laws of men in a just manner (a).
The neglect of obedience is an offence to God (b).

Here three Objections are commonly brought.

THE FIRST Objection is taken out of the words of Saint Paul to the Galatians; *After that ye have known God, (saith he) or rather are known of God, how turns ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, wherunto you desire again to be in bondage? ye observe daies, and monthes, and times, and yeares; I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vaine* (c). Where the Apostle seemes to condemne the observation of all daies whatsoever.

c) Gal. 4. 9, 10, 11.

THE ANSWER. These words must not be understood in so large a sense; for then the Apostle should condemne himselfe in observing *Feasts* (d), and also all good Christians in observing *daies unto the Lord* (e); which were impious to imagine, and implies a contradiction. But (as *Augustine, Jerome, Theodoret, Bruno, Zanchy*, and others expound the place) he reproveth the Galatians for observing daies after that *Jewish superstitious manner* (f), giving reverence unto them (g), as if they had beene expressly commanded by God; whereby they brought themselves under the Law, and were entangled againe with the yoke of bondage (h).

d) *Act. 20. 16.
1 Cor. 5. 8. & 16. 8.
e) Rom. 14. 6.*

f) *August. ad Janu-
arium, Ep. 108. &
ad Adamant. cap. 16.
Theodoret. Bruno
in dd. locum.
Non simpliciter abro-*

*gati sunt dies festi, sed tantum ex parte, quatenus legales erant, & per Moysen populo Israelitico præscripti. Zanch. in 4. præcept. de diebus Festis, q. 1. Hookers Eccles. Polic. l. 5. sect. 70.
g) Nos non similiter observamus: non enim calendaria colimus, nec dies festos, sicut illi in luxuria & pulch, sed in sinceritate agmina opalamur. Hieron. in Epist. ad Galat. c. 4. (h) Galat. 4. 21. & 5. 1.*

) Galat. 9. 1.

THE SECOND Objection is, That the Magistrates power of making things indifferent to become necessary, destroyes Christian liberty, in which we are commanded by the Apostle to stand fast (i). Therefore such power is unlawfull.

THE ANSWER. Necessity is two-fold; *Externall, Internall.*
The

The Magistrates power neither does nor can make things indifferent to become absolutely necessary in themselves: For that were to destroy the liberty where with Christ hath made us free (a). But the Magistrates power makes things indifferent to be necessary in respect of external necessity, for the avoiding of the contempt of authority, and for the shunning of scandall or offence (b). And in this, our Christian Liberty does not consist; For in all things indifferent God commands us to yeild obedience unto the Magistrate (c).

a) Acts 15. 9, 10, 28.
Rom. 14. 14. 1 Cor. 3.
22. 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2, 3,
4. 5. Coloss. 2. 16,
b) Master Perkins
Comment. on the
Galar. Cap. 5.
Willis Synopsi 9.

generall controversie, q. 7. page 495. Becan. loc. Commun. 33. Sect. 15. Obligans rationem scandalum et contemptum rationem. Hospin. de orig. Felt. Christian. c. 2. Wolleb. Theol. Christiane l. 2. c. 7. Sect. 14. (c) Actions indifferent in the case of offence, cease to be indifferent, and come under some Commandment of the Morall Law. Perkins cases of Conscience l. 1. c. 5. Sect. 5.

THE THIRD Objection. Feast-daies are Holy-daies (d): But no Magistrates can make Holy-daies: (because to sanctifie daies or make them holy, is the priviledge of Gods power (e)). Therefore no Magistrate can make Feast-daies.

d) In the end of the
Calender before the
Booke of Common
Prayer.

THE Answer. Tis true; no Magistrates can so sanctifie daies unto holy uses, as to impose them upon the Church necessarily and perpetually to be observed of all and every Christian, under Pain of damnation of soul and body: For this is the priviledge of Gods power (f). But Christian Magistrates, in their own Dominions, have authority from God to sanctifie or appoint daies unto holy uses, so that the snare of absolute necessity be not laid upon mens consciences (g). Wherefore Feast-daies are Holy-daies, not in themselves, (by a quality of holinesse inherent, and under the Paine of the great curse (h) to be observed, as the Papists fondly imagine (i) but in respect of their holy use. In which sense also, the Temple, the Water in Baptisme, the Bread and Wine at the Communion, are often called holy (k).

e) Perth Assembly
refuted, p. 66, 67, 68.
f) Compare Gen. 2. 2
3. & Exod. 20. 10,
11. with Deut. 17. 26

g) *Modo conscientie
absoluta necessitas lo-
quum non impiciatur.*
Wolleb. Theol. Chris-
tiane: ibidem.

h) *ad Deum 25. Gal. 1. 8, 9. (i) Concil. Trident. Sess. 7. Can. 13. Bellarm. cap. 10. propos. 2. Apoc. 1. Sect. 6. Rhemist. Apoc. 1. Sect. 6. (k) August. quest. 57. super Levit. Basil. Moral. Reg. 30. Ursin. explicat. catechet. quest. 77: & quest. 122. Sect. 2. Willis Synopsi. pag. 494.*

Thus much for the first Position. We come now unto the second, (to wit, That the Church of England doth upon just and good grounds celebrate the Nativity of our Lord on the 25.

day of December) which will evidently appeare, when the forementioned particulars are discussed and proved.

SECTION III.

The severall names and titles of this Feast.

(a) ὅτι ἐφάνη Θεὸς ἀνθρώποις δια γένεσιν.

Greg. Naz. Orat. 38.
Basil. de humana Christi generat.

(b) Θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί. 1 Tim. 3. 16

(c) Naz. O. ar. in S. Lumin. Chrysost.

(d) In argumento Epistolae Theophili etiam

Epiphanius appellat

tionem accommodatam in Aegypto fuisse ad diem natalis Domini ostenditur: quo nomine

et diem Baptismi Christi nuncuparent et utrumque simul die solemni celebrarent.

Magdeb. Cent. 4. c. 6.

Beroald. ch. o. l. 4. c. 2.

(e) ὅς φανερώμενος ἐστίν, Mat. 2. 7.

(f) See the Collect, Epistle and Gospel for the Feast of the Epiphany.

(g) Naz. Grat. 38.

(h) Chrysost. Orat. Panegy. in S. Philogonium.

(i) Amb. Serm. 12, 13, 14, 15.

(k) John 1. 5. 9.

(l) Hieron. Tom. 9. 82.

High and excellent were the titles which the Christian Churches gave unto this Feast.

The Greek or Easterne Church called it, 1. Θεοφάνια, vel Θεοφανία Gods appearing; because God appeared unto men by the Nativity (a); or (to use the Apostles phrase) God was manifested in the flesh (b).

2. Ἐπιφάνια, (c) THE appearing καὶ ἑξοχλῶ; implying that this appearing excelled all other whatsoever. But here two things are worthy to be noted: The one is, that the Churches in Egypt, because they celebrated Christs Birth, and also his Baptisme, upon one and the same day, called both those Feasts promiscuously, Epiphania (d). The other is, That the Moderne Churches have through use and custome of speech, restrained the word Epiphany, unto the Feast commonly called, Twelfth day: which is celebrated in memory of the miraculous appearing of a Starre (e); by the leading whereof, God did manifest his onely begotten Sonne to the Gentiles (f).

3. Γενεθλία τῆ σωτῆρος (g) The Birth day of THE Saviour.

4. Ἡ ἑορτὴ μέγιστος, καὶ πασῶν ἐστὶν ἑορτὴν μνησέπολις (h); The greater Feast, and the Mother or chief of all Feasts.

The Latine or Westerne Church called it, 1. Dies Nativitatis (i) The day of THE Nativity, by way of eminencie and dignity.

2. Luminaria, the Feast of light; because they used many Lights and Candles at this Feast; or rather, because Christ, the light of all lights, that true light (k) then came into the world.

3. Dies natalis Domini (l) vel Natalitia Domini, The Birth day of our Lord.

The

The Church of *England*, as she is seated in the West, so she imitates the Latine, styling this Feast *Christ's Birth day*, *The Nativity of Christ*, or *Christmas day* (a). The signification of which word, *Christmas*, because the name is by some much excepted against, we shall briefly unfold.

The word *Masse* without all question comes from the Latine word *Missa*: but whether *Missa* be derived from the Hebrew tongue, or be a Latine word corrupted, is no small controversie (b).

They that derive *Missa* from the Hebrew, conceive that it comes from מִסָּח *Missah*, which signifies an oblation or offering (c); and is framed by adding the letter הּ unto the end of מִסָּח a word signifying *Personal service* or *tribute* (d).

They that account *Missa* to be a Latine word corrupted, conceive that the Fathers used it in stead of *Missa*, which signifies a *sending away*: For in antient times when the *Liturgy* or *Publick service* was ended (e), and the Communicants addressed themselves to be partakers of the *Lords Supper*, it was a custome (as it is unto this day) to *send away* the younger sort, such as were not yet fully instructed and *Catechised* (f). Hence it came to passe, that *Missa* was taken for, and signified the *Lords Supper*; and so a *sacrifice*, an *oblation* or *offering*. 1. Because the *Lords Supper* is an *Eucharistical sacrifice*; being a solemne remembrance and celebration of the Propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. 2. Because in the *Lords Supper* we present our bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God (g). 3. Because when the *Lords Supper* is celebrated, we offer up almes for the relief of the needy members of Christ; which is a kind of *spirituall sacrifice* (h).

We see then however the derivation of the word *Missa* may be disputed, yet on both sides it is agreed, that the signification thereof is a *sacrifice*, an *oblation*, or *offering*. And if so, why may not the day on which we solemnize *Christ's Birth*, be properly and fitly called *Christmas day*; it being a day full of *Offerings*, full of *Sacrifices* (i) unto Christ? On this day we offer up *spirituall sacrifices* (k): we offer sacrifices of

a) Booke of Homil.
Tom. 2. Hom. 12.
See *Proper Psalms* and
Lessons in the Booke
of Common Prayer.

b) Bucan. loc. com. 48.
Sect. 1. Utin. explic.
catechet. qu. 80.

c) מִסָּח נִרְבַּח
Oblationem sponsent.
Deur. 16. 10.

Συνόψιμα hic
conectuntur; et pos-
terior. vix Hebraica,
tamen prioris exege-
tica subiicitur. Con-
sule Vatabli Annot.
& Translat. Gene-
venses.

d) Ruchlin. de Ra-
diment. Hebr. lib. 2.

e) Post ἀνέστησαν
publicam. Utin. Ex-
plicat. Catechet.
quest. 75. sect. 1.

f) Ambr. epist. lib. 5.
epist. 33. Fit *Missa*.
Catechumenis. Aug. de
Temp. Sermon. 237.

g) Rom. 12. 1.
h) Phil. 4. 18.
Heb. 13. 16.

Est enim Eleemosyna
bista quadam, quam
DEO offerimus, be-
nefaciendo egenis Chri-
sti membris. Pastor.
Lex pag. 97.

i) Sacrificale opus est
annunciare Evangelium.
O. fig. in Epist. ad
Rom. lib. 10.

ἱερουργεῖν ἢ θύειν.
Rom. 15. 16. Ipsum mihi sacerdotum est predicare et
evangelizare: hanc of-

a) Heb. 13. 15.
b) Psal. 107. 22. &
116. 17.

Amos. 4. 5. (c) Psal. 27. 6. (d) Deut. 33. 19. Psal. 4. 5. & 51. 19. (e) Heb. 13. 16.

praise (a); we offer sacrifices of thanksgiving (b); we offer sacrifices of joy (c); we offer sacrifices of righteousness (d); and the Scriptures tell us, with such sacrifices God is well pleased (e).

SECTION IV.

That the Feast of the Nativity is grounded upon the Scriptures.

THE Scriptures, as well the Old as the New Testament abundantly set forth the great esteeme we ought to have of the *Birth-day of Christ*.

G O D promised *this day*, when He said unto the Serpent, *The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head (a).*

The Patriarch *Abraham* (saith our Saviour) *rejoyced to see this day*.*

The Patriarch *Jacob* foretold *this day*, saying, *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his feet, until SHILOH (that is, CHRIST) come (b).*

The Prophet *Isaiah* marks out *this day* as a speciall (c) and wonderfull day; **B E H O L D**, a *Virgin shall conceive and bear a Sonne, and shall call his name Immanuel (d).* Nay, so ravished is he with the consideration thereof, that he rejoyces with the Church, as if the *day of Christs Birth* were then come: *The People (saith he) that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath he shined. They joy before thee, according to the joy in harvest, & as men rejoyce when they divide the spoils. For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given (e).*

In the Prophecy of *Zechariah (f)*, **T H U** saith the **L O R D** of Hosts, **B E H O L D**, I will bring forth my Servants (Christ) the **B R A N C H (g).** In that day shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine, and under the figge-tree. For at the Birth of our Saviour the Prince of Peace, there was peace throughout the whole world (h).

a) Gen. 3. 14, 15.
* John 8. 56. Upon which Text read Bishop Andrews Sermon, and the Annotations of the Assembly of Divines.
b) Gen. 49. 10. See The Scriptures Harmony, pag. 44. 45.
c) Quoad dies, æquales omnes; quoad res, quæ in eis præstantur una est præstantior alia. Hospin. de orig. Fest. Christian. cap. 2.
d) Isa. 7. 14.
e) Isa. 9. 2, 3, 6.
f) Zech. 3. 8. 10.
g) Gujus nomen est German: hoc est quod alii propheta prædixerat, vocaturq; German ut Isa. 4. 2. German Domini; & Jer. 33. 15. German David, vel German Justitiz. Quibus locis Chaldaus Paraphr. vocat Messiam. Vatab. in dict. locum.
h) Isa. 2. 4. & 9. 6, 7, 8, 6, 10. Paul. Oros. lib. 6. c. 21. Isidor. Pelusiota. l. 4. Ep. 203. Natali Domini, Natali est pacis. Leo Mag. in Solemn. Nar. Ser. 6. cap. 5. Vict. Strigel. Schol. Hist. in Chro. Melan. l. 2. de 3. Mon. p. 419. Func. Chro. fol. 91. Genebr. Chro. p. 479.

This

This day the Apostle calls the fulness of time (a); when this day came, men and Angels were filled with unspeakable joy and admiration. BEHOLD, (said the Angel of the Lord unto the Shepherds) I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born THIS DAY, in the City of David, a Saviour which is CHRIST THE LORD. And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men (k).

in plenitudinem temporum adoptionis venisse, & proxima fore regnum celorum, & inhabitare intra homines credentes in eum qui ex Virgine natus est, Immanuel. Item. advers. Hæres. l. 3. cap. 25. & Luke 2. 10, 11, 13, 14.

Having then the Patriarchs, Prophets, the people of God, and the very Angels themselves for an example of our rejoicing at the day of Christs Birth: it is agreeable to the Word of God, and manifestly grounded thereon, that the Feast or day of our Saviours Birth, should be celebrated with all possible joy and publique thanksgiving unto God.

SECTION V.

That this Feast was duly celebrated by the Christians in all ages; and is approved by all Reformed Churches.

THOUGH we cannot with some (a) peremptorily affirm, that the Feast of the Nativity was kept by the Apostles; yet will we not with others (b) obstinately deny it: Because the Apostles and other Christians, as they used other things in different, so also they freely used Feasts (c), and might in probability use this; it being a Feast observed in the times of the Apostles. For CLEMENT, a glorious Martyr of Christ Jesus, whom S. Paul reckons (d) amongst his fellow

ὁ τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου. Gal. 4. 4. idem spiritus Dei, qui in Prophetis quidem præconatus est, & quæstus esset adventum Domini, in senioribus ætate interpretatus est bene, quæ bene prædicta fuerant: in se & in Apostolis annuncia-

Cujusmodi sunt dies Dominici, Natalis, &c. Polyd. Virgil. de invent. rerum. lib. 6. cap. 8. b) Perb. Assembly refused, pag. 79, 80. (c) Apostoli et alii Christiani, ut aliis rebus adiaphoris, ita etiam festis libere usi sunt. Magdeb. Centur. lib. 1. cap. 6. (d) As Eusebius (ait, Eccles. Hist. lib. 3. cap. 4.

e) Phil. 4. 3.

f) *Dies Festus agitate fratres, ac primum quidem Diem Natale.*

Clement. Const. Apost. lib. 5. cap. 12. This Author is cited by Mr. Ley, in his *Sunday Sabbath*, pag. 167. and by Mr. R. Byfield, in his *Doctrine of the Sabbath*, pag. 150. and by Doctor Young in *Dies Dominica*, pag. 82. and he is the only Author cited by them for the Lords day in this first Age. Why should any grudge us the same Liberty?

In the second age.

From the year 100. unto 200.

g) *Statutum est, nocte sancta Nativitatis Domini Salvatoris, Liturgias celebrent, & hymnum Angelicum in eis solemniter decantent, quoniam et eadem nocte ab Angelo pastorem nuntiatus est, sicut ipsa veritas testatur.* Telesph Epist. decret. Tom. 1. Concil. pag. 117.

h) Luke 2. 8. unto verse 20.

i) *Domini natalem quocunque die 8. Calend. Jan. veneris, debemus celebrare.* Magdeb. Centur. 2. cap. 6. Hospin. de orig. Fest. Christi. Mens. Decemb. die 25. Theoph. Approved by M. Perkins. 2. Vol in his *Demonstrat. of the Probleme*, p. 597.

k) *Adest Christi mul-tum desiderata et diu expectata Nativitas, adest solemnitas in-chyia; et in praemia Salvatoris gratias et laudes visitatori suo per orbem terrarum sancta reddit Ecclesia.* Cyp. de nativ. Christi, Tom. 3. Approved by Mr. Perkins dd. il. p. 492. * Vid. Zanch. ibid.

labourers in the Gospel, whose names are in the Bookes of life (e) writes thus unto the Christian Church; Brethren-keepe diligently Feast dayes, and truly in the FIRST place the day of Christs Birth (f).

TELESPHORUS, in his Decretall Epistle saith (g) *It is ordained that in the holy night of the Nativity of our Lord and Saviour, they doe celebrate Publique Church services, and in them solemnly sing the Angels Hymne, because also the same night he was declared unto the Shepherds by an Angel, as the truth it selfe doth witnesse* (h).

THEOPHILUS Bishop of Casarea in Palestine, saith, that *We OUGHT to celebrate the Birth-day of our Lord, on what day soever the 25. of December shall happen* (i).

In the third age.

From the year 200. unto 300.

CYPRIAN begins his *Treatise on the Nativity* in this manner; *This much wished for, and long expected Nativity of Christ is come, the famous Solemnity is come; and in the presence of her Saviour the holy Church throughout the World do render thanks and praises unto her Visitour* (k). From which words it doth most evidently appeare, (saith learned Zanchy) *That the day of Christs Birth had been a Solemne Festival to the whole Church, and was ACCUSTOMED to be kept Holy, before that time.* *

In the fourth age.

From the year 300. unto 400.

At NICOMEDIA (a City of Bithinia) *When the Festival day of Christs Birth came, and a multitude of Christians of all ages, had assembled together in the Temple to*

celebrate

celebrate that Birth-day, Dioclesian the Tyrant, having gotten as it were a fit time, and an advantageous occasion, whereby he might accomplish his madness and fury, sent men thither to inclose the Temple, and to set it on fire round about; and so consumed them all to ashes, even twenty thousand persons (l).

nis, qua Christi nomine censetur, in Templo Natalem cum celebratura convulisset, Dioclesianus tyrannus veluti opportunum tempus et lucrosam occasionem natus, per quam vesaniam et furorem suum adimpleret, misit eo qui templum clauderent, et ignem circumcirca accederent; et sic eos omnes viginti millium numerum expletes in cinerem redegit. Niceph. Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 6.

BASIL the Great, hath left us one Sermon which he preached on Christs Birth-day. *

* Basil. Mag. Tom. 1. Fol. 466.

NZIAMZEN in an Oration upon the day of Christs Nativity, saith, I am confident that the heavenly powers doe also this present day celebrate the Feast together, and leap exceedingly for joy; if verily they be endued with the love of GOD and men (m).

m) Virtutes celestes quoque bodierno die simul Festum celebrare ac lætitia gessere confido, si quidem hominum deique amor prædita sint. Greg. Naz. Orat. 38.

AMBROSE hath left us sixe most Divine Sermons which he preached on the Anniversary day of Christs Birth (n).

n) Ambr. Sermon. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

EPIPHANIUS recordeth this day among the solempne Feasts of the Catholique Church (o).

o) Epiph. libro, cui titulus est, Compendiaria vera doctrina de fide Cathol. et Apost. Eccles. ad fin. lib. ad vers. Hæres.

HIEROME saith, that the day kept in memory of our Lords Nativity, is the day on which the ancient report runnes he was borne (p).

p) Dies, qua traditur natus. Hieron. Tom. 9. pag. 82. G.

VALENTINIAN, Emperour of the West, THEODOSIVS the Great, and his sonne ARCADIVS, Emperours of the East, by Imperiall decrees authorized the Feast of the Nativity (q).

q) Zaga Zabo, quoted by Willet in his Synopf. 9. gen. controverf. q. 8. pag. 406.

In the fifth age.

From the year 400. unto 500.

CHRYSOSTOME hath one Homily or Sermon on the day of Christs Birth (r). MAXIMUS Bishop of Tours in France hath six (s). LEO the Great, hath ten (t). CHRISOLOGUS one (u). FULGENTIUS one (x). Hitherto are the daies of the Pure and Apostolique Church (y).

r) Vide Chrysol. opera, post expofit. cap. 1. Lucæ.

s) Vid Homil. Hye malis Maximi Episc.

Turonenſ. (t) Leo. Mag. in ſolemnit. Nativ. Dom. (u) Chryſol. ſect. 17. 2. (x) Fulgent. Hom. l. 17. y) Eccleſia Apoſtolica nomine intelligo, uſq; tempora Gelaſi Epif. Rom. An. Dom. 495. Zanch. in 4. præcept. Theſ. 2. de dieb. feſtis.

D

Now

c) *Iustin* Emperour of the East, about the yeare of salvation, 523. decreed, that the Feast of the holy Nativity of Christ should be observed. *Niceph. Hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 28.*

a) See the Magdeburg Centuriatous in every Century, c. 6.

b) *Peris* Assembly refused, pag. 85, 86.

Now that the Birth day of Christ was duly solemnized from the first 500. yeares downward (z), even to the times of Reformation, is as cleare as the Sunne at noon day (a): And therefore we shall omit the prooffe thereof. (esteeming it no lesse ridiculous then unprofitable, to insist on that which no man denies) and come directly unto the Reformed Churches, whose judgement and practise in this particular, we shall faithfully deliver; that the mouches of all such may be stoppt, who under a false and vaine pretence of seeking an Uniformity in Discipline with other Reformed Churches (b), doe defame and endeavour to suppress the most antient and commendable observation of this and all other Feast-dayes whatsoever.

The Churches of HELVETIA, or Switzer-land. *Wee* (say they) give no way at all to Jewish observances and superstitions; for we believe not, that one day is more holy then another; but we celebrate the Lords day, not the sabbath, freely and unconstrained. And these Churches we exceedingly approve of, which according to Christian liberty, doe religiously celebrate the memory of our Lords Nativity, Circumcision, Conception, Passion, Resurrection, Ascension into Heaven, and the sending downe of the Holy Ghost upon his Disciples (c).

The Churches of BOHEMIAH. Many of the ancient Ceremonies (say they) and such as were brought in by custome, so neare as may be, are retained among us even at this day: of this sort be certaine daies appointed for Feast-daies and Holy-daies; as the Lords day, the Nativity of Christ, &c. (d)

The Church of BREMEN keeps the Festivall day of Christs Birth (e).

The Church of AVSPURG. As for us we teach that those traditions are not to be condemned, which command nothing against the Lawes of God, and have a civill use and end; namely, such as are ordained to this end, that things might be done orderly in the Church. Of which sort are the traditions about Holy-daies, the Lords day, the Nativity, &c. (f)

The Churches of SAVOY, POLAND, HUNGARY, SCOTLAND, (g) FRANCE and THE LOW-COUNTRIES, doe allow the Feasts that belong to Christ; his Nativity, Circumcision, Passion, &c. *

The

e) Harmon. Conf. f. Sect. 16. Confes. Helvet. poster. c. 24.

d) Confes. of Bohemia, chap. 15.

e) See the second Register in the end of the Psalms, translated by Ambr. Lobwasser.

f) Conf. of Augsburg, Art. 4.

g) Ley. Sunday a Sabbath, pag. 172.

* Dr. Raimold; conf. with Hart. c. 8. d. 2. Vid Harm. Confes. In Catalogo Confessionum.

The Churches of DENMARK, SWEDEN, and all other LUTHERAN Churches, doe solemnly observe the Feast of the Nativity of Christ, and on that day use proper Hymnes of thanksgiving, made by *Martin Luther* himselfe (g).

The Church of GENEVA, does celebrate the day of the Nativity (h).

In FRANCE their most notable Preachers give the Communion on that day; as did also the ancient Primitive Churches throughout the world (i). So did the SCOTTISH Church also for 800. years after Christ, before ever it was polluted with Popery (k).

ZUINGLIUS, Rector of the Church of Zurich, accounts the Birth-day of our Lord amongst those Holy-dayes, which he would have observed (l).

ZANCHY, Professor of Divinity in the University of Heidelberg & an eminent Father of the Protestant Church, expressly affirmeth, *Though the Church of Christ be at liberty to choose unto her selfe what dayes she should have to be sanctified, or set apart unto holy uses; yet it is better, more worthy of praise, and more profitable to sanctifie those which the Ancient, the Apostolique, and the purer Church hath also accustomed to sanctifie; Namely the day of Christs Birth, Passion, Resurrection &c.* (m)

POLANUS, Professor of Divinity in the University of Basil, placeth the Feast of the Nativity of Christ under the title of *The Anniversary Feasts of the New Testament*; which he defines to be, *Holy times appointed among Christians for the worship of God in publique; That is, For to maintaine the consent of faith amongst themselves by the preaching of Gods Word, and the use of the Sacraments, and with one accord to yeeld due worship unto God, in the sacrifice of thanksgiving, prayers and almes* (n).

talibus, Passionis, Resurrectionis Christi, &c. Zanch. in 4. præcept. de diebus Festis. q. 1. Thes. 1. & sequens. Item, in confes. Christ. Rel. c. 25. sect. 30. (n) *Tempora sacra cultui domo inter Christianos destinata publice, — ad alendum fidei consensum inter ipsos per prædicationem verbi dei et usum Sacramentorum; et exhibendam unanimiter cultum Deo debitum in sacrificio gratiarum actionis precum et elemosinarum.* Polan. Syntag. Theol. l. 9. c. 35.

g) See the Psalms, Hymnes, and spiritual songs of Dr. *Martin Luther*, commonly used in their Churches.

h) Perib Assembly refused, pag. 85.

i) Ambros. Serm. 17.

Atii quotidie communicam corpori et sanguini Dominico, alii certi diebus accipiunt; alibi nullus dies intermissus, quo non offeratur, alibi Sabbatum tantum et Dominico, alibi tantum Dominico: Et si quid aliud huiusmodi animadverti potest, totum hoc genus rerum liberis habes observationes. Aug. Ep. 118.

k) See the life of Will: Cowper Bishop of Galloway, pag. 12.

l) Zuingl. Tom. 1. Art. 25.

m) *Quæquam Ecclesie Christi liberum est, quæ velit, dies sibi sanctificandos eligere; bene scit, tamen est, laudabilis, atque utilis, eos sanctificare, quos etiam vetus atq; Apostolica puriorq; Ecclesia sanctificare solita est; nempe, Diem Na-*

- o) *Ex veteribus Ecclesie doctores collegi.*
 Gerhard. Aphorif.
 Epist. Ded. & p. 63.
 usque ad pag. 70.
 p) *Melanct.* Annot.
 in die Nat. Chr. par. 3
 q) *Bullinger.* Decad. 2.
 Serm. 4.
 r) *Bucer;* in Mar. cap.
 12. loc. de feriis.
 s) *Ursin.* Tra& Theol.
 in 4. P. except.
 t) *Heming.* in lib. Homil.
 u) *Chytraus* in Disposit.
 Epist. (sub initio.
 w) *Hook.* Eccl. Pol. l. 5.
 x) *Bishop Andrews*
 his Sermons.
 y) *Boys.* on the Festiv.
 Epist. & Gospels.
 z) *Rainolds* Conf.
 with *Hart.* c. 8. divis. 2.

JOHN GERHARD, Professor of Divinity in the University of *Jena*, hath gathered together many excellent and godly sentences out of the ancient Fathers for the furtherance and help of our meditations on the day of *Christ's Nativity* (o).

And what shall we more say? For the time would faile us to tell of *Melancton*, (p) of *Bullinger*, (q) of *Bucer*, (r) of *Ursin*, (s) of *Hemingius*, (t) of *Chytraus*, (u) of *Hooker*, (w) of *Andrews*, (x) of *Boys*, (y) of *Rainolds*, (z) and many others famous for piety and learning, who by their Sermons, Writings, Examples, have justified the yearly Observation of *Christ's Birth-day*.

Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, we must according to the truth asseverate, *That the Celebration of this Feast is confirmed by the judgement and practice of the Christian Church in all ages.*

SECT. VI.

That our Saviour was borne on the 25. day of December.

- a) *Bucholz.* Ind.
 Chronol. pag. 114.
 115.
 b) *Nam 24. Februar.*
divi Matthei vigilia
celebratur atque ita
festus dies 25. differtur,
nihil secus iam
die vigilia, quam die
festo 6. Calend. Martii
dicatur. Vide
Compendium Pier.
Valerian. Bellunen.
sphæram. pag. 223.
 c) *Sol abscondit circum-*
tum signorum in 365.
diebus et quarta unius
diei præterrem modicâ,
qua nullus est sensibili-
tas. Spher. Johan.
 a *Sacrobosco.* c. 4.

FOR the right understanding of this Position; we must know, that *Julius Caesar*, 44. yeares before the Birth of *Christ*, (a) observing the fallensse of the Accompt then in use, ordained the year to consist of 365. dayes and 6. houres, which 6. houres in 4. yeares made 24. houres, or a day Civill, and were added unto the end of *February*: By reason whereof every fourth yeare contained 366. dayes, and was called *Annus Bissextilis*, the Bissextile or Leap-yeare, because the sixth of the Calends of March was twice written (b).

This Accompt for many years seemed to have no sensible error; (c) yet in progresse of time it was discovered to be not so exactly agreeable with the naturall motion of the Sun. For the *Julian* yeare exceeding the true Solar yeare 10. minutes and 48. seconds, caused the *Equinoxes* and *Solstices* yearly to change their places and flye back so many minutes and seconds. Whereupon Pope *Gregory* the XIII. by

by the advice and direction of *Antoninus Lilius*, and other excellent Mathematicians, in the year of *Christ*, 1582. did correct the Calendar; making the year to consist of 365. dayes, 5. houres, 49. minutes, 12. seconds: (d) And that the *Vernal Equinox*, which then was on the 11. day of March, might be reduced unto the 21. of March, as it was at the time of the first *Nicene Councell*, (e) he commanded 10. dayes in the month of *October*, viz. from the 4. day to the 14. to be left out; so as the 4. day of the month was accounted for the 14. day (f). Hence it comes to passe, that the new Accompt is alwayes 10. dayes before the old.

But as to the precise day of *Christ's Nativity*, both Accompts are erroneous: For if we summe up the excess of the *Julian* year (which is, as we said, 10. minutes and 48. seconds) from the time of *Augustus Caesar*, when our Saviour was borne, untill the year 1643. we shall finde that the *Winter Solstice* is gone back from the 25. day of *December*, (g) 12. dayes 7. houres, 44. minutes, 27. seconds: And therefore the *Gregorian* Accompt (being grounded on the *Nicene Councell*, when as it should have been reduced to the time of *Christ's Nativity*) erreth almost 2. dayes; but the *Julian* Accompt more then 12. dayes; and which is so much worse, is going every year farther and farther from the truth (h). Nevertheless we grant that the *Julian* Accompt, though it remaine un-reformed, may yet for some hundred of yeares be used without any grosse and palpable disordering of the times.

observeth, the shortest day was on the 25. of *December*, on which day *Christ* our Redeemer was borne (h). *Nisi annus aliquando corrigatur futurum olim est, ut salutis nostrae natalitius dies, qui brumales olim erant, in vernum tempus invadant, Pascha in autum.* Valeat. Bellunen. d. i. j.

Having now laid open, wherein and why these Accompts differ, as also how they may with ease be reduced unto the just and exact day of *Christ's Nativity*; we proceed to the prooffe of that wherein both Accompts agree, (i) to wit, That *Christ* was borne on the 25. day of *December*, which we shall evidence by the cleer testimonies of the Fathers and other approved Writers, Ancient and Moderne.

D 3

AMBROSE

d) Euseb. Phyl. parte 2. Tra&. 1. de Mundo & Caelo. quest. 6.

e) An. Dom. 325. according to *Bucholich terms*, but 320. or 322. according to others.

f) Iussu Papa in mensis Octobri à 4. usq; ad Octob. 14. prateriri dies 10. ita in quartum mensis dies habetur pro decimo quarto die: ut aequinoctiorum ac Solstitionum dies reducerentur ad antiquas illas meas, quas in Concilio Niceno determinarunt S. S. Patres. *Bucholz. Ind. Chron. pag. 714.*

g) Tempore Augusti Octaviani, ut observat *Plinius*, bruma dies vigesimo quinto decembris erat: quo die natus est *Christus* auctor noster. *Valer. Bellanen.* compend in *Sphaeram*, p. 224. In the time of *Augustus Octavian*, as *Plini*

f) Vide *Calend. Julianum & Rom. Baron.* apparat. ad annal. Eccles. sub finem. *Genebr. Chron. lib. 3. pag. 479. Gualterius Tab Chronograph. à Christo nato. fol. 2. Gorden Lesmor Chr. Tom. 2. in Appar. c. 4.*

d) Occupaverat totum diem nocturnum longitudo, nisi in ipso die non crevitate Christi reful-
 gisset adventus: qui si-
 ut ore suo humani ge-
 neris peccatorum tene-
 bras discussit, ita et
 die Nativitatis sue
 caliginem tenebras
 amputavit, et uno eo-
 demque ortu lucem pa-
 riter intulit et homi-
 nibus et diebus. Unde
 non est mirum si crescit
 dies, qui gemino fulgo-
 ris splendore vestitur.
 Ambros. Ser. 13.

l) Johannes natus est,
 sicut tradit Ecclesia,
 Octavo Calendas Julias,
 cum jam incipimus
 minui dies. Dominus
 autem natus Octavo
 Calendas Ianuarias
 quando jam incipimus
 crescere. Audi ipsum
 Ioannem confitentem:
 Illum oportet cre-
 cere, me autem mi-
 nuui. August. in Psal. 132. & de Trin. lib. 3. c. 5.

m According to the true accompt; from which the Julian hath valued more then 10. dayes, as we shewed before. n John 3. 30.
 (o) Ὁ ὁς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἡμέραις τοῦ ἱεροῦ ἱεροῦτος ἱεροῦτος, ὁ τῆς ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ἐκκλησίας καὶ
 πᾶσις ὁρθολογίας. Irid. Pelusiot. lib. 1. Epist. 156. p Christus qui in nativitate Ioannis jam
 trium mensum incorrupte virgine fuerat conceptus, supererant ei, ut et ipse secundum humanam nati-
 vitem suppleret mensis novem, alii menses sex, qui nunc est Octavo Calendas Julias in Octavo Ca-
 lendas Ianuarias sunt menses sex. Quibus supplicis novem mensibus, initiante decimo Christus mundo
 natus est. Vide Chrylost. expof. cap. 2. Lucæ.

AMBRAS his expression is divine & elegant; (k) Length of nights had possessed the whole day, had not the coming of Christ shined gloriously in the very shortness of dayes: Who, as by his Birth he dispelled the darkness of mens sins, so also in the day of his Nativity he cut off the darkness of night; and by one and the same rising brought light as well to men as days. Whence it is no marvelle if the day increase, which is clothed with a double splendour of brightness.

AUGUSTINE saith (l) John was borne at the Church by tradition teaches, on the 24 day of June, even when the dayes begin to shorten; (m) but our LORD was borne on the 25. d. y of December even when the dayes begin to lengthen. Hear John himselfe confessing; He must increase, but I must decrease (n).

CHRYSOSTOME, that wise Interpreter of the secrets of God, the eye of the Church in Byzantium (now called Constantinople) and of all other Churches (o) after an inquisit debate of this point, concludeth thus. Christ, who at the Nativity of John had now been conceived three moneths in the pure and undefiled womb; to the end that he himself also should fulfill nine months according to the course of humane birth, there remained for him six months more; which six months are from the 24. of June unto the 25. of December. And when nine months were ended, in the beginning of the tenth, CHRIST was borne in the world (p).

OROSIUS saith, Christ was born on the 25. day of December when all encreases of the ensuing year do first begin (q).

BERNARD saith, Christ was born in winter, he was born in the night (r). And he thus begins his third Anniversary Sermon preached on that day, Great truly (my most beloved

r Hieme natus est, nocte natus est Christus. Bern. in Nat. Dom. Ser. 3.

Brethren)

q) Natus est Christus VIII. Kalend Ianuarii, quando primum incrementa omnia anni venientis incipiunt. P. Oros. lib. 7. cap. 2.

Brethren) in this dayes Solemnity of our Lords Birth; but the shortnesse of the day constraines to shorten my Sermon: Nor let any one marvaile that my words are brief, since on this day GOD the Father did abreviate the Eternall WORD.

BEDA, styled, *The Venerable*, a man renowned for his great knowledge in Antiquities, and very skilfull in the calculation of times, asserteth positively, *That the Nativity of our Saviour Jesus Christ was on the 25. day of December* *.

NICEPHORUS saith, (f) *It was then the 25. day of December; when, O thou WORD OF GOD, the unspeakable mystery of thy goodnesse and love towards mankind, and the exceeding great mystery of thy marvelous birth was accomplished.*

CHEMNITIVS saith, *It is the common opinion that the 25. day of December should be hallowed for a remembrance of the day of the Lords Nativity.*

GENEBRARD hath shewed out of thir owne Acco^unts and Kalenders, that the Egyptian and Greek Churches did celebrate the Birth-day of Christ as we doe, on the 25. day of December (u): So did the Arabian, Persian, and Syriack Churches, as learned Master Gregory hath fully proved (w).

And though concerning this matter the Scriptures have g v n no peremptory determination, (for then dispute were impious, and tradition needlesse) yet so farre are they from being repugnant, that upon a judicious examination they will appeare to be very consonant thereunto.

When our Saviour was Baptized of John, he began to be about thirty yeers of age, saith Saint Luke (x). Had he onely said, *he was about thirty years*, we might have conceived him to have been as well somewhat more as lesse: but by adding these words, *He began to be*, the Evangelist implyes that he was not yet full thirty years, and yet he wanted but little, perhaps one day or two; for he was well nigh, he BEGAN (saith he) *to be about thirty years of age*. And indeed the entering into his Ministry at the time of his Baptisme (which all:

* Beda. Tom. 1.
in Ephemer. Mens.
Decemb.

f Vigilius et quintus
tum mensis Decembris
erat dies, quam ineffa-
bile pietatis et amoris
erga genus humanum
tua, Verbum Dei,
maximumque inenar-
rabilis partus perfici-
tur mysterium. Ni-
ceph. Hist. Eccl.
lib. ca. 1. 12.

u Vulgaris opinio est,
25. diem Decembris
esse memorie Natalis
Domini sacram.

Chem. Harm. Evanga.
cap. 8.

w Genebr.

Chron. l. 2 p. 266,
267.

x See his Notes and
Observations, chap. 34.

x Luk. 3. 21 22.

y) B:roald.Chron.
l.3.cap.1.Chemnit.
Harm.Evangel.in
Prolegom.c.3. & Po-
lan.Synrag.Theol.l.6.c.55.

Becan.Loc.commun.47.se&.37. & Numb. 4. 23. 30. 47. *Siquis virginis ætatis annos non impleverit, nullo modo presbyter ordinetur, etiam si valde sit dignus; quis et ipse dominus tricesimo anno baptizatus est, et cepit docere.* Mart.Brachlib.can.Græc.c.20.

all men grant hee did) (y) is a sufficient prooffe that he wanted very little and no considerable time of being *thirty years old* (z).

a) Mark 1. 12.

b) John 1. 28.

c) Mat. 4. 1, 2.

Mark 1. 13.

Luke 4. 2.

After his Baptisme immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness (a). And though beyond Jordan (b) there were many Wildernesses at hand, yet let us admit for his journey 5 dayes.

He was there in the Wilderness (c). 40 dayes.

When those dayes were ended the Devill taketh him up into the holy City, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the Temple: Afterwards, taketh him up into an exceeding high mountaine, and sheweth him all the Kingdomes of the world, and the glory of them in a moment of time (d). For which (though for ought we know these temptations might be within the space of one day) yet we admit 2 da.

d) Mat. 4. 5. 8.

Luk. 3. 5.

e) John 1. 28.

The Devill having left him, Christ returneth unto Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was Baptizing (e). For which let us admit, as we did for his progresse 5 da.

f) The first day is ex-

pressed, Joh. 1. v. 26.

The second, ver. 29.

The third, ver. 35.

g) Compare Joh. 1. 43

with chap. 2. 1. (h)

According to the descriptions of Canana set forth by Mr. John More, and Mr. John Speed, which are of all others the exactest.

i) John 2. 1.

He was with John (f)

The day following, he began his journey towards Cana of Galilee (g); a Town distant from Bethabara 66 English miles (h). For which let us admit 6 da.

There was a marriage in the said Cana (i), after his coming thither 3 da.

And because we read of a marriage-feast that lasted seven dayes (k), we shall admit that this feast also, (though probably it was not so long) lasted 7 da.

k) Judges 14. 10. 17.

l) John 2. 12.

After this marriage feast, that is, when this feast was ended, Christ went down to Capernaum (l); a Town distant from Cana of Galilee neer 30. English miles. For which journey let us admit 3 da.

m) John 2. 12.

He continued not there many dayes (m): let us grant 6 da.

Then the Jews Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem

Jerusalem (n); distant from *Capernaum*, 72. English miles:
For which journey let us allow

He was at *Jerusalem* some certaine daies before the *Feast*
of the *Passeover* (o) : let us admit

In all 92. dayes.

These summed up, amount unto 92. dayes, or 3. months;
so that (if conjectures guided by reason doe not very much
faile) our Saviour at the first *Passeover* after his Baptisme
was 30. yeares old, and about 3. months : At the second
Passeover (p) was 31. yeares old, and about 3. months : At
the third *Passeover* (q) was 32. yeares old, & about 3. months:
At the fourth *Passeover* (r) was 33. yeares old, and about 3
moneths : (s) on the eve whereof he was crucified, which
the Jewes call the *Preparation day*; (t) and was the 25 day of
March (u) Now accompting 92 dayes backward from the
25 day of *March*, the Birth-day of our Saviour will fall
neer the 25 day of *December* according to the testimonies
of the Fathers and Writers before alledged, and the tradi-
tion of the Churches of God.

Howbeit of late there are risen up a sort of wild-brained
Zelots; who carried on with an earnest desire of introduc-
ing all manner of novelties (whereby the *antient and Apo-
stolicall Church of England* * might be rendred contempti-
ble) have buzzed into the heads of some ignorant people,
that Christ was born in the moneth of *September*, when the
Sun entring into *Libra* makes the second *Equinotiall*. An
opinion not dreamed of, untill *Beroaldus* published his
Chronology : (y) and it is worth our paines to observe, how
well the Master and Schollars do agree touching the age of
our Saviour.

Beroaldus saith, that Christ lived 32 yeares and a halfe : *
And by those words of Saint *Luke*, *Jesus began to be about*
thirty yeares of age, (a) he understands he was almost 29.
yeares old : As if when the Scriptures expresse about 5000.
(b) their meaning was, almost 4000. But his prime Schollar
noting the absurdity of this exposition, grants Christ to be
30. yeares old at his Baptisme; yet by coyning one *Passeo-
ver*, he out-runs the truth, and makes him to have lived 34.

E

yeares

n) John 2. 13.

o) Compare John 2.

verse 14. with ver. 23.

p) John 5. 1.

q) John 6. 4.

r) John 13. 1.

s) See the Scriptures

Harmony, p. 46, 47.

t) Mar. 27. 62. Mar.

15. 42. Joh. 19. 31. 42.

u) *Offavo Calendas*

Aprilis conceptus,

quo et passus. Aug.

de Trin. l. 4. c. 5. Con-

ceptus et passus Chri-

stus mense Martii 8.

Calend. Aprilis.

Chrylos. Exposit. c. 1.

Luc. 2.

* *Usserius* Archiep.

Armach. de Britan.

Eccles. primordiis. c. 1

y) Anno Dom. 1577

* *Certe mortuum illum*

fuisse pro nobis in cruce

oportet anno Tiberii 18

etum quum etatis annum

ageret 33. id est, quum

annos compluisset tri-

ginta duos et dimidi-

um. Beroald. Chro. l. 3.

c. 8.

a) *Αυτὸς ὡς ἰσθὺς*

ὡσεὶ ἐτῶς τριάκοντα

ἔχοντων. Luk. 3.

23.

b) *ὡσεὶ πενήκοντι*

ετοσιν. John 6. 10.

c) Scalig. de emendar. temporum, l. 6.

d) Wolph. Chron. l. 1. H. broughtons Consent of Scripture.

e) Dan. 9. 27.

f) In dimidio hebdomada cessare faciet sacrificium & oblationem.

Loquitur hic Propheeta de ultima hebdomada, quam quia definit in mense Nisan, quo passus est Dominus, si dividas in duas partes equales, medietatem suam in anni quarti mense Tisri habere deprehendere. Beza. roald. chron. l. 4. c. 2.

g) Heb. 9. 26. & chap. 7. 18. 19. & chap. 8. 13. Coloss. 2. 17.

Sacrificia externa ac typica omnia (Christus suo sacrificio implevit & abrogavit. Polan. Syn. Theol. l. 9. c. 30. Ursin. explicat. catechet. quæst. 9. 2. scilicet 3. b) John. 19. 30.

i) Mat. 27. 51. Mark 15. 38. John 4. 23. Velum templi fissum est in duas partes à summo usque ad imum ut indicaretur abrogationem esse typicam ingressionem Summi Sacerdotis Levitici in sanctum a sanctorum & deinceps inutilem fore, una cum aliis ceremoniis Legalis sacerdotii. Polan. Syn. tag. Theol. lib. 6. cap. 18.

k) The Scriptures Harmony, pag. 48.

yeares and a halfe. (c) Others affirme, that he was about 33. yeares old when he suffered: (d) which expression does best please these Doctours; for whether he were 32. and an halfe, or 33. and a quarter, or 33. and an halfe; yet still they are in the right who say, he was about 33.

And because they cannot produce so much as one poore stumbling Writer for the countenancing of their paradoxes, they endeavour to subvert the common and Orthodox opinion by cavils, halfe-reasons, and forgeries: whereof we shall here by way of objection, deliver a just and exact catalogue, faithfully collected.

THE FIRST Objection. *In the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease* (c). The Prophet speaketh here of the last week of the LXX. which if you divide into two equall parts, you shall find the middle of it to be in the seventh month of the fourth yeare, because the week ends in the month MARCH, wherein our Lord suffered (f). Therefore our Saviour was baptized, and consequently born in September.

THE Answer. Christ may be said to cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, two manner of waies: either by way of consummation, or, by way of preparation. 1. By way of consummation; and this was not in the midst, but in the end of the last week by the sacrifice of himselfe (g) implied in those words, *Consummatum est, it is finished* (h); and also by the waile of the Temple rent in twaine (i). 2. By way of Preparation; and this was either IMMEDIATELY by himself, when he was baptized and entred into his Ministry; being neare the midst (k), but not precisely in the midst of the last week. For by the foregoing particular examination of the daies, we have sufficiently shewed, that the time betwixt the Baptisme of Christ, and the next Passeeover, cannot with any probability be extended beyond the space of 3. months. Or MEDIATLY by his fore-runner, herald, and Messenger, John the Baptist, who preaching the Baptisme of repentance (l), did so prepare the way of the Lord, that all sacrifices, oblations, Legall rites and ceremonies, were afterwards without scruple forsaken and abandoned. Hence our Saviour saith, *The Law and the Prophets were until John* (m); and thus

thus in the middle of the last week Christ preparatively by John caused the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; For John the Baptist began to preach in the month *Septemb.* soone after the Feast of Trumpets (n).

l) Mark 1, 2, 3, 4:
m) Math 11. 13,
Luke 16. 16.
Ioannes Baptista Anno
15. Tiberii Cæs. vocatus
one divina excitatus

penitentiam predicare incipit, veteris Testamenti abrogationem instituit Baptismo orditur.
Balehoz. Ind. Chronol. pag. 145. (n) Levit. 23. 24. Numb. 29. 1. Func. Comment. in Chronolog. lib. 1.

THE SECOND Objection. John was conceived presently after Zacharias had executed the Priests office before GOD in the order of his course (o); who was of the course of Abia (p), the eighth course of the Priests (q): But the eighth course of the Priests fell in the end of *June*; for every course continued a fortnight, and eight fortnights make foure months; which four months (accounting from the beginning of *Abib*, now called *March*, the first month of the year (r) will end in *June*: Therefore John was conceived in *June*; and by consequence, not Christs Birth, but his Conception (which was six months after Johns (s) must be in *December*.

o) Luke 1. 8. 23. 24.
p) Luke 1. 5.
q) 1 Chron. 24. 10.

r) Exod. 12. 2.

s) Luke. 36.

THE Answer. We grant the *Major*; but the *Minor* is notoriously false: For First, The Priests course was *weekly*, and continued from Sabbath to Sabbath (t).

t) 1 Chron. 9. 29.
Joseph. Antiqu. Jud.
l. 7. c. 11. Godwins
Moses and Aaron, l. 1.
c. 5. The Annot. of
the Assembly of Div.
on 1. Chron. 24. 9.
u) 1 Chron. 24. 18.
x) See the Vulgar
Notes on Exod. 12.
2. Godwins Moses
and Aaron, l. 3. c. 1.
y) Willers fix-fold
Com. on Exo. 12. q. 5.

Secondly, It supposeth that the Priests courses and the yeare began together; which is against common sense; for there being but 24. courses. (u) it must needs be that at the end of the 24. course, the first began, and so could have no relation to the month or time of the yeare.

Thirdly, it supposeth that the month *Abib*, was wholly the same with our *March*, which is contrary to all Writers; who doe at the most admit that *Abib* tooke part of *March*, and part of *April* (x); And sometimes (saith Willers) it may be all without *March*; as, when the Hebrews every third year put in a month to make the yeare agree with the course of the Sun (y).

* Zacharias ad Abie
familiam pertinebat,
cui forte octavo loco
ministerium oban-
dum erat in Sacrario:
sed quando eius quan-
dum, non intelligitur à
nobis, Beroaldus, Chro-
nic. l. 4. c. 2.

Wherefore the said Argument being built upon so many falshities and uncertainties, can conclude nothing. And, here- in our Opposite Beroaldus speaks very ingenuously, both for himselfe and his faction; *we* (saith he) doe neither understand when the course of Zacharias was, nor how long it lasted.*

THE THIRD Objection. *Clemens Alexandrinus* writeth, that they who very curiously have sought after the yeare and day of our Lords Birth, have referred it some unto the 25. day of the month of May, some unto the 25. day of Aprill (o). Therefore in his time(p) the day of Christs Birth was not certainly knowne(q).

THE Answer. If this argument be good, then there is no point either in Divinity or Phylolophy certainly known; because there is no point which is not through ignorance, wilfulnesse, or an itching affectation of singularity by some contradicted; at least questioned. Howsoever, had these curious searchers shewed us where *S. Luke* saith, that *Christ* was conceived in the sixth month of the *Legall* yeare, we would have concluded with them, that *Christ* was borne either in May, by reckoning from *August* exclusively; or in *April*, by accompting from *August* inclusively: but there can be nothing more certaine then that they are mistaken. For the *Angel Gabriel* does directly say, *this is the sixth month* (not from the beginning of the year, but) *with her, who was called barren* (r); that is, from the conception of *John the Baptist*. Nor does *Clemens Alexandrinus* afford these searchers any more credit then the bare mentioning of their groundlesse phantasies; which truly is more then they deserved.

THE FOURTH Objection. *It was the custome of the Church of Alexandria to celebrate the Birth of John Baptist, at the first time when that Solemnity was there brought in, on the 23. day of Aprill; as Cyrill reporteth in an Homily upon that subject.* And if *John the Baptist* was borne in *Aprill*, then could not *Christ* be borne in *December*, (s) there being but 6. Months between their births (t).

THE Answer. All the Homilies of *Cyrill*, usually styled his twelve Bookes of Comments upon *John*, are both by Protestants and Papists accounted of very little or no authority. For, it is certaine that one *Iodocus Clitlovens* wrote 4. bookes of those twelve, and the rest are held dubious and much unlikely to be *Cyrills* (u). Nor is it probably true, that the Church of *Alexandria* shoud once celebrate the Birth-day of *John Baptist* in *Aprill*; seeing the *Egyptian Churches*

o) Eos qui curiosius
annum nati Domini &
diem requisierunt, par-
tim retulisse ad vigesi-
mum quintum diem
mensis πᾶχωνε Α.
gyptiorum. partim retu-
lisse ad vigesimum
quintum diem
παριουβι scribit.
Clem. Alexandr.
strom. lib. 1.

p) About the yeare of
the Lord, 195.

q) Beroald. Chron. l. 3.
c. 8. Scalig. de emen-
dat. Temp. l. 6. Calvis.
Isag. Chronolog. c. 46

r) Luke 36.

s) H. Casaub. Exer-
citat. 1. c. 25.

t) Luke 1. 36.

u) Perkins. præpar.
ad Demonstrat.
Problem. Anno
Christi. 430. Bellarm.
in Carolag. Eccles.
Scriptorum.

Churches (of which the Church of *Alexandria* was the chiefe) did ever maintaine that *Christ* was borne on the 25. day of December, and yearly kept that day Festivall in memory thereof. Besides the words here alledged (be they *Cyrils*, or be they not) doe no way impugne us, for in regard that the Church of *Alexandria* forsook the Observation of the 23. of *Aprill* which at first they Observed, it is apparant they found themselves in an error: And in regard they afterwards constantly celebrated the birth of *Jo: Baptist* on the 24. of *June* (which our Adversaries themselves acknowledge,) & it must needs be that they judged the Greek and Latine Churches to be in the right.

THE FIFTH Objection. *Bede* affirms, that the *Indictions* began on the 24 day of September; and that our Lord was borne (*Indictione quarta incunte*) when the fourth *Indiction* began: Therefore *Christ* was borne on the 24. day of September.

THE Answer. *Bede* does not say, our Lord was borne when the fourth *Indiction* began, but in the fourth *Indiction*, according to *Dionysius* u; which words are too generall for us to conclude thence the yeare of *Christ's* Birth, much lesse the month, least of all the day. And yet considering that an *Indiction* is the space of 15. years &, he might very well have said so; though *Christ* was not borne till the end of three months after the first day of the *Indiction*: As we say frequently, that such a thing was or hapned in the beginning of our *Kings* reigne, though it were 3.6. or 10. months after the first day of His reigne.

THE SIXTH Objection. Taxes and Collections of Tribute began on the 24. day of September; as appears by the *Indictions*, which were instituted to bear accompt of the payment of tribute y: Therefore *Augustus Cæsar's* Decree at our Saviours Birth that all the World should be taxed, went out & on the 24. of Sept. and so *Christ* was borne on that day.

THE Answer. We deny the Argument: For it is a most absurd inference, viz. because the ordinary and yearly taxes, collections of tribute, and *Indictions* (which were invented in the time of *Constantine* the Great, and ordained by Him

w *Gembr. Chronol.*
l. 1 p. 266. 267.
Notes and Observat.
chap. 34.

x If *Casaub.* ll. dd.

f *Incipimus indictiones* ab VIII. *Calendas Octobris, idemq; terminatur.* *Beda* libro de ratione Temporum, cap. 46.
s *Beroald. Chron.* lib. 3 cap. 8.
u *Quarta indictione secundum Dionysium natus est dominus.* *Beda* lib. dd. c. 47.
x *Indictio est spacium quindecim annorum.* *Bulchoz Chronol.* pag. 131.

y *Hoptons Concordancy* of yeares, c. 32.

z *Luk.* 2. 1.
a *Beroald. ibid.*

b) *Æra indictionum* Casares, in scriptoribus Græcè usitatissima, incipit 24. Septembris, Anno Christi, 312. instituta fuit à Constantino Magno. Bulchoz. Ind. Chronol. p. 217. Calvis. Isag. Chron. cap. 9.

Cyculus indictionum institutus est in Concilio Nicæno, qui post quindecim annos in orbem redeat. Romani hanc æram indictionum inceperunt à Calendis Ian. sequentibus quos, & nos hodie sequimur. Alsted. 1. Chronol. Epocharum. sect. 6.

c) Luke 2. 4. 5.

d) No marvelle if these *Septembrians* oppose the tradition of Christ's Church, when the Jewes' beliefe is the rule of their doctrine.

e) Beroald. lib. dd. cap. dd. *Hospinian*. de orig. fest. Chri. mens. Decemb. Calvis. Isag. Chron. c. 46. *Broughs* Adversus *Adversus* Corruptions. p. 43. 44.

f) *Quasi terra Philistinorum*, the land of the Philistines. Vide Varabl. transl. Bibl.

g) according to the observations of Master *John Moore*, and Master *John Speed*.

Tract. 1. part 2. de Phys. (i) Note, that *Africa* tooke its name from a & *pelus*, that is, without cold. (k) *Carpenters* Geography, lib. 2. cap. 3. Theorem. 10. l) *Levit.* 23. 5, 6, 10, 11.

312. yeares after Christ (b) began on the 24. day of September; therefore that extraordinary and most remarkable decree Deceit by *Augustus* Caesar when our Saviour was born, began on the same day. Nay, here is a cluster of absurdities: For if the issuing forth of *Cæsars* Decree, and our Saviours Birth were on the self same day, then was the Decree sent from *Rome* to *Nazareth*, above a 1000. miles distant, and from *Nazareth* *Ioseph* with *Mary* his espoused Wife great with child (c), and expecting every houre to be delivered, must forthwith post 95. English miles unto *Bethlehem*, all in one day. But who knowes not that *Error* begets *Error*?

THE SEVENTH Objection. A Jew (d) would not soon believe that a wise Emperour as *Augustus* was, would command poore men to come in Winter to their own Towns. Neither was it the fit time for the Shepherds to be in the field. And as *Baptisme* was according to his Birth-month, it was not wholesome for men to goe up to the head in water in mid winter. Therefore Christ was not borne in December (e).

THE Answer. The Land of *Canaan* (now called *Palestine* (f)) is found to extend it selfe from the degree 30. and 52. Scruples, unto the degree 33. and 44. Scruples of Latitude or Elevation; And for Longitude, it is placed betwixt the degree 64. 32. minutes, and the degree 69. and 10. minutes (g): so that it is included fully and wholly within the third Climate (h): the same Climate in which *Fex* and *Morocco* (i) are situate; where the winter-season (as every Geographer and Mariner will tell us) is hotter then our *May* here in *England*: and yet *Palestine* in heat exceeds *Fex* and *Morocco*, because it lyeth above 40. degrees nearer East then they doe (k).

This also may be collected out of the Scripture; For in regard that a sheafe of the first fruits of harvest was yearly offered on the second day after the *Passover* (l), which was

the 16. day of the Jewes Month *Abil*, alias *Nisan* (m), and is with us the 27. of *March* (n) (which 27. according to the true accompt, falls on the 15. of our *March*) It must necessarily foliow that the temperature of the Month *December* in the Land of *Canaan*, is answerable to our *May*, if not *June*. Though therefore a disobedient and gainfaying (o) Jew will not believe, yet an understanding Christian cannot but grant, that the season of the year did no way hinder the convenient execution of *Cæsars* Decree, nor the Shepherds being in the fields, nor our Saviours going into the River *Jordan*, in *December*.

fuisse statim post Pascha, & ante Pentecosten absolutam fuisse etiam triticeam messiem certum & manifestum est. Chemnit. Harm. Evang. Prolegom. cap. 3. (n) After the *Iulian* Accompt. o) Rom. 10. 21.

THE EIGHTH Objection. *In times past there have been various opinions in the Church concerning the Birth of Christ; some held he was borne on the sixth of January, but Epiphanius saith on the Fifth; (p) some said on the Tenth of April, some on the nineteenth of May, others in the moneth September, THE MOST PART on the 25. of December (q). And if in times past the day of Christs Birth was not agreed on; it is GOD, not man, must now determine it (r).*

THE Answer. This Argument is many wayes absurd, and in it selfe contradictory. For, amongst all people and Nations the consent of the most part is an agreement; otherwise there would be never any agreement in this World. Again, it tells us not, who those *some* and *others* were: belike, men of such learning and note, that the ancient Church-Writers would not mention them, and our Adversaries cannot. As for *Epiphanius*; he indeed twice affirmeth, that *Christ* was borne in the 33. years of the first *Herod*, the Son of *Antipater*, which was the 42. year of *Augustus Cæsar*; (s) but he neither sets down the Moneth, nor day of the Moneth.

And here let the Reader take notice of the vaine proceedings and miserable issue of Schismatics: From doubtings of the truth they fall into denials from denials to new Opinions, from new Opinions to manifest and bold lying, from lying to horrible confusion, and in the end conclude in just nothing, save their owne shame.

THE

m) *Secunda arymorum die, quæ est mensis hujus decima sexta, frugibus demissis & balenæ hujus ubertatis auborem per gratitudinem honorari, bordes primas offerunt. Joseph. Antiqu. Jud. lib. c. 10. See Perkins. 2. vol. pag. 680. In Palestina messiem bordeaceum*

p Beroald. Chron. lib. 4. cap. 2.
q Plerisque natum 25. Decembri. I. Casaub.
Exercit. 1. cap. 25.
r *Utrius Dei est, non hominis definire dicim.* Joseph. Scalig. in Canonibus Ilagogicis, p. 298.

s Domini facta est in carne Nativitas tricesimo tertio anno primi Herodis, Antipatri filii qui erat annus quadragesimus secundus Augusti Cæsaris. Epiphani contra Hæres. 1. tom. 1. Hæres. 20. & 1. 3. tom. 2. Hæres. 78.

THE NINTH Objection. The Church of *England* does not celebrate the true day of *Christ's Birth*: therefore the Church of *England* is erroneous.

THE Answer, we deny the Antecedent; for though the Church of *England* does not celebrate the true day exactly and precisely taken, as we said before: yet she celebrates the true day according to the *Italian* Accompt, which Accompt is yet generally embraced by the Protestants, and not to be despised (p). Nevertheless it is not the day, but the benefit we remember, which no good Christian will deny should be done (q).

p Ea est anni forma
Juliana, cui omnes as-
suevimus: hæc sola est
certissimum temporis
orbiculi, cum omnibus
fit notissima, familiarissima, cognita & observata facillima, & ad temporum à creatione mundi huc
usque labentium seriem deducendum accommodatissima. Calvin. 1. sag. Chron. cap. 8. q See the life
and death of William Cooper, Bishop of Galloway. pag. 8

r) Luke 2. 8.

THE TENTH, and last Objection. Christ was borne in the night (r): Therefore he was not born on the 25. day of December.

f) Quoniam Tobiamus
a Sacrobosco et qui
cum sequuntur no-
mina permutant, et
quem nos naturalem,
illi civilem seu artifi-
cialem; quem nos ci-
vilem illi naturalem
diem vocant: nos ve-
ritatem sequimur. Pol-
lan. Syntag. Theol.
lib. 1. c. 45. & lib. 5. c.
16. Hanc diei naturalis
et artificialis appellati-
onem definitionemque,
novam et barba a sem-
per credidi, quisque eam
primum nobis tradiderit
Vide scholion Eliæ

THE Answer. The day is of two sorts; *Naturall* or *Civill* (f); *The naturall day* is the time from Sun-rising unto Sun-setting; whose opposite is the *night*, from Sun-set unto Sun-rising. *The Civill day* is the space of 24. hours, in which time the Sunne is by the first orbe carried round about the World: It containes as well the night as the true day; and is therefore termed by the Greeks (i) *νυχθημερον*, and may in Latine be aptly translated *noctiduum*. The former is meant when God called the light, day: The latter, when it is said, the evening and the morning were the first day (u). And of the latter we ought here to be understood when wee speake of the 25. day of December; For our Saviour was borne presently after 12. a Clock in the Night (x), at which time the Civill day began according to the custome of the Romans y.

Vineti in sphaeram Joan. a sacrobosco. c. 3. (i) *νυχθημερον* ἐστὶ τὸ βυθὸς τοῦ νοῦ, 2 Cor. 12. 21. u Gen. 1. 5. x Luke 2. 8. y More Romano dies a media nocte incipit, et sequentis noctis media parte finitur. Itaque quicquid in his viginti quatuor horis actum est, perinde est quasi quavis hora lucis actum esset. Paulus 1. Cus Digest. jur. Civil. l. tit. 12.

The vanity and weaknesse of all objections to the contrary being discovered, we conclude, according to the Testimony of the ancient Fathers, the Tradition of the Churches of God, and the evident concurrence of Sacred Scripture, *That the 25. day of December is the just, true, and exact day of our Saviours Birth.*

SECT. VII.

The work of the Day.

O How good, how pleasant, how kind a thing it is to remember the Works of the Day in its own Day (a). a) *Opus diei in die sua*

This worke, whether at home or in publique consists of three parts or duties. The first is, a reverend explanation;

1. OF THE PERSON INCARNATED: which was *Christ the Lord* (b). The Word, the Eternall Sonne of God, the second person of the most glorious Trinity, was made flesh (c); not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh (d), but by assuming unto the Godhead the nature (not the person (e) of man, and all the naturall infirmities thereof, sinne excepted (f): which nature the Father formed in the Sonne by the Holy Ghost, of the Substance of the blessed Virgin Mary, who was of the Tribe of Judah, of the Royall Family of David (g). Wherefore *Christ was perfect God*, and so equall to the Father (h); *perfect man*, and so inferiour to the Father (i).

b) Luke 2.11: c) ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο. Joh. 1.14. d) Vide Symbolum Aθανασίου. e) Wolleb. Christi. Theolog. l. i. c. 16. f) Heb. 2.17. & 4.15. ὁμολογούμεν ὅτι πάντα τὰ ὀυστικά ἐξ ἀδιάβλητα πάθην ἀνθρώπου ἀνέλαβεν ὁλον γὰρ τὸ ἀνθρώπου καὶ πάντα τὰ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἀνέλαβεν, πληρὴ τῆς ἀμαρτίας. Damascen. Orthodoxa fidei lib. 3. cap. 20. (g) Luk. 1. 32. (h) Joh. 10. 30. Phil. 2. 6 i) Iohn 14. 28.

2. HOW CHRIST WAS BORNE OF THE VIRGIN MARY: and that was by opening of the Womb (k) after the ordinary way: not *utero clauso*, the womb being shut, as the Papists imagine (l). k) Luke 2.7.23: l) Catechism. Rom. part 1. cap. 4. Respon. ad quest. 4.

3. WHERE HE WAS BORNE: to wit, in the Land of Judah in Bethlehem (m) which signifies, the house of Bread (n); teaching us, that *Christ was the true bread of life which came down* (n) Mat. 2. 6. n) Pas. Lexicon,

^o John 6. 33. 35.

^p Luke 2. 7.

down from Heaven (^o) In a stable; and was laid in a Manger, because there was no room for them in the Inn (^p); teaching us by his example to beare corporall poverty with patience.

^q Luke 2. 1. 2.
^r Iosephus calleth him Quirinus; and in placing this Taxe after the degrading of Archelauus, erreth 4. years. See Ioseph. Antiq. Ind. l. 17. c. ult.
^s Iob. 18. cap. 1.
^t Gen. 49. 10.
^u Luke 2. 8.
^v Luke 1. 78, 79.
^x Luk 2. 8, 9, 10, 11.
^y Mat. 2. 1, 2, 11.

4. WHEN HE WAS BORNE: and that was 1. when a Decree went out from Augustus Cæsar that all the World should be taxed. 2. When Cyrenius was Governor of Syria. 3. The Evangelist sayes not of Judea because Judea was at that time joyned unto the Province of Syria: teaching us, that the true Messiah, Christ, was come; For the Scepter was then departed not only from the Tribe of Judah, but even from the Jews. 3. In the night; signifying that the day-spring from on high visited us, to give light to them that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death.

5. OF GODS GRACIOUS AND MIRACULOUS DISCOVERY OF HIS BIRTH. 1. To the poor Shepherds neere Bethlehém by an Angell. 2. To the rich Wisemen in the East by a Star: teaching us, that poore and rich, simple and wise, Jew and Gentile, neere and farre off, are all alike accepted by God, in, through, and for Christ.

6. Of the glorious celebration of Christs Nativity by a multitude of the heavenly host praising GOD.

The second part is a pious meditation on the END and NECESSITY of Christs Birth; and that was threefold. 1. That Gods Promises, and the predictions of his servants the Prophets, might be accomplished. 2. That God might thereby manifest his love towards mankind. 3. That redemption might be to them that were under the Law: otherwise eternall death had passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

The third and chiefeft part is, an humble and sincere thanksgiving unto GOD for those great and unestimable benefits which we receive by the sacred Birth of our Lord CHRIST, the Saviour of the World: outwardly expressing our thankfulness, 1. In Psalmes and Hymnes, and Spirituall Songs. 2. In a larger and more liberall use of Gods Creatures then at ordinary times. 3. In our

^z Luke 2. 13, 14.
^a Gen. 3. 15. & 12.
^b 3. & 18. 18. & 22. 8.
^c Psal. 22. 18.
^d Isa. 7. 14 & 9. 6, 7.
^e Jer. 23. 5. Mich. 5. 2.
^f Hos. 11. 1. Hag. 2. 9.
^g Zech. 8. 9, 10. & 6. 12 & 9. 9.
^h John 3. 16, 17.
ⁱ John 4. 9, 10.
^j Gal. 4. 4, 5.
^k Rom. 5. 12.
^l John 4. 42.
^m 1 Chron. 16. 7.
ⁿ Ephes. 5. 19.
^o Gen. 21. 8.
^p 1 Chron. 12. 39, 40.
^q & 16. 3.

our charity unto the needy members of Christ i.

i Luke 14. 13.

Whosoever therefore regardeth this day aright, must regard it unto the Lord, giving God thanks^k: and not spend it in rioting and drunkenness^l, nor in chambering and wantonness^l as too too many have done, to the high dishonour of Almighty God, the reproach of our Church; and the fearfull hazard of their owne soules.

k Rom. 14. 6.

l Rom. 13. 13.

The dayes which are chosen out to serve as publique memorials

of Gods mercies, ought to be clothed with those outward robes of holinesse, whereby the difference from other dayes may be made sensible. Hook & Eccles. Policy lib. 5. sect. 70.

SECT. VIII.

A patheticall exhortation unto the true Sonnes of the Church of England.

ARe these things so? May Christian Magistrates constitute Feast-dayes, and require obedience unto such Constitutions^a? Has the Church of England Ordained that the Birth day of Christ should bee yearly kept Festivall^b? Is this Ordination grounded upon the Scriptures^c? Is it confirmed by the practice of the Christian Church from the time of the Apostles unto this day, and doe all Reformed Churches approve thereof^d? Is the 25. day of December the Birth-day of our Saviour^e? Does the work of the day tend to the Glory of God, the Honour of Christ, and Comfort of his Church^f? What wretched

a Sect. 2.

b 5. and 6. Edw. 6.

c 3. 1 Eliz. c. 1.

d Sect. 4.

e Sect. 5.

f Sect. 6.

f Sect. 7.

Herodians are they then, who revile and envy the solemnization of Christs Birth, calling it *Heathenisme*, and most blasphemously perswading the people g, *That a Feast celebrated unto the Honour of CHRIST, is no better then that Feast which the Israelites made unto the molten Calfe* h?

g These words, or to the same effect, were uttered in the Church of S. Mich.

Corbillion, on the Lords day, the 25. of February, 1643. God give the speaker repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, 2 Tim. 2. 25. h Exod. 32. 4, 5, 6.

But let us Brethren, who have not so learned Christ i, be subject to Principalities and Powers: let us obey Magistrates; and be ready to every good word^k, yet not daring to despise our Mother the Church, the spouse of Christ l: let

i Ephes. 4. 20.

k Titus 2. 1.

l Cant. 4. 9.

m) 2 Pet. 10. 13, 17,
19. Jude 8, 12, 13.
n) 2 Thes. 2. 15.

o) Psal. 78. 5, 6, 7.
p) See Willers Synop-
sis. 9. generall Con-
troverſie. quæſt. 8. p.
505.

us beware of those who are presumptuous, self-willed, that bring railing accusations: who are spots in our Feasts of charity, wandering Stars, wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest, while they promise liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption, to Whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever (m). Let us stand fast, and hold the traditions which we have been taught (n): let us make them known to our children, that the generations to come may know them, even the children which shall be borne; who shall arise and declare them to their children, that they may not forget the works of GOD (o); And principally may keep the memorial of CHRIST'S Nativity (p); continuing the celebration of this most ancient, most Christian, most blessed Feast un- till the second coming of SHILOH.

Halelu-jah.

AN
ANSWER
TO SIXTEENE
QUÆRES,
Touching the Rise and Observation of
CHRISTMAS,

Propounded by Mr. Joseph Hemming of Uttoxeter.



Hough, if we consider the time since the foregoing Treatise was published, it being five yeares compleat last April, 1649. we might rather insist upon an Answer from our Opponents, then take notice of their *Quæres*, which to multiply into scores or hundreds, is nothing difficult, even to the meanest Sophister: Yet lest our Christian Solemnity should suffer by our silence, and for the satisfaction of this Quærist and all others whom the Spirit of contradiction and by-ends have not made incapable of the truth, we shall briefly and clearly return our Resolution to each particular; With reference, as occasion shall be and that often is, to what hath been above delivered; it being altogether improper and needlesse to make repetition.

QUÆRE I.

Whether such Religious Customs as are binding to all the Churches of Jesus Christ, ought not to have sure footing upon the Word of GOD, or Apostolicall Practice?

ANSWER.

WE must here distinguish of *Religious Customs*: Some are Religious *Absolutely* some *Respectively*. Customs *absolutely*, religious, have sure footing upon the Word of GOD, either in expresse termes or by evident consequence; as *The peoples assembling to GOD'S Service, the Celebration of the*

[*Sacraments*, and the like : These are absolutely and ever binding to all the Churches of *Jesus Christ*. Customs *respectively* religious, are such as in respect of their *Matter, Manner, End* are Religious, but have their Institution from the practice and Authority of GOD'S Church ; Of which number is this Observation of the Nativity; The *Matter* whereof is our Saviours Birth, The *Manner* is with preaching, prayers, thanksgiving, almes, and a liberall yet sober use of GOD'S Creatures ; the *End* is the Honour of Christ and our owne Edification : These Customes though in themselves things indifferent, yet in respect of the Churches Authority become binding ; and the wilfull contempt of them is a contempt of Authority, a scandall and offence to the Church, which by the joynt consent of all Protestant Divines is a sinne against the Morall Law (a).

a) See our second Section. Alio, Harmon. Confess. fidel. Sect. 16. A&S and Monuments. vol. 1. pag. 5. col. 8. M^r. Edwards Treatise against Toleration pag. 14.

b) As Mr. Scudder would have in his *Christians daily walk*, cap. 6. pag. 158.
c) Mat. 26. 20.
d) A&S. 10. 6, 7.
e) 1 Cor. 11. 21,

Your *Quere* then contains a double error :

First, it implies a misunderstanding of the Nature of our Festival; for we esteem it not (as you propound) amongst Customes *absolutely* religious.

Secondly, by the Disjunctive [Or] you insinuate, *that such Customes as have sure footing upon Apostolicall Practices, are absolutely religious and binding to all Christian Churches*; Which is false; For it is the Apostolicall *Precept*, not Apostolicall *Practice*, that makes a Custom *absolutely* religious and universally binding. The *Practice* of our Saviour himselfe, and of his Apostles with him, and the Church to boot (b), did not change the Nature of things indifferent : but as they used them freely, so they left them free : We read that the holy Communion was celebrated at the time of Supper, by our Saviour and his Disciples (c), by the Disciples and the Church of *Troas* (d), by the Church at *Corinth* (e) : and yet who will say ; that the Celebration of the Communion at that time is a Custom *absolutely* religious, hath Authority of Divine Precept, and bindeth all the Churches of Christ ?

Q U E R E II.

Whether you can substantially prove that Christ was borne on the 25. of December ? and what your proofes are ?

A N S W E R.

If the full consent of clear and undoubted Records, if the Testimony of the antient Greek and Latin Churches, if the generall acknow-

Acknowledgement of those that professe Christianity, be substantiall proofs; (which no man of common sense will deny) then have we substantially proved that Christ was borne on the 25. of December. (f) And truly upon the like reasons as our Opponents make scruple at this, may they question what ever is chronicled: Admit, we should affirme, that William the Conquerour was crowned at Westminster on the 25. of December, and for the Authority thereof quote Roger de Hoveden, Matthew Paris, and others; Might not one ask, as they doe of Christs Birth-day, how could this be? King Herold was high and puissant in October before; and a Soldier cannot soone believe that a wise Prince as Duke William was, would in Winter wish his Southern people, wage warre in a Northerne Country. Neither was it the fit time for Armies to be in the field; And it is not probable, that this Kingdome was conquered in the space of two Winter moneths. (g) But, what sense is in such kinde of arguing, we leave to the judgement of any rationall man; and for perfect solution of this *Quere* referre you to our sixth Section.

f) See our sixth Section.

g) Compare this with Beccaldine Chron. l. 3. c. 8. and Broughtons Advertisement of Corruptions, p. 43, 44.

Q U E R E III. & IV.

Whether the Celebration of that day can be clearly warranted by you from Scripture? and what your Scriptures are, Or, Whether you can clear it by found consequence from the New Testament, though not set downe there *in solidum verbi*?

A N S W E R.

Both these *Queres* arise from a mistaken Principle; For the Observation of this Feast (as we said before) is not a Custom absolutely religious, whose warrant indeed is from Scripture, either expressly or by sound Consequence. Howbeit we must note; Though this Anniversary Festivall hath no particular and Speciall Scripture-warrant, whereby this very day is set apart to this very end; yet it may have and hath a Generall Scripture-warrant, under which it is authorized: For the Observation of such Anniversary Feasts is just and warranted from the Equity and sense of the Ceremoniall Law, which the Apostle (1 Cor. 9. 10.) sheweth to be still in force; and therefore the Legall Anniversary Feasts doe in Equity require and even now teach

(b) Amel.
Medul. Theol.
l. 2. c. 15. n. 16
(i) Gal. 4. 4, 5. 9,
10.
Colof. 2. 14, 15,
16, 17.

teach, that there ought to be Gospell-Anniversary Feasts, assigned for extraordinary Thanksgivings and rehearfalls of G O D'S extraordinary benefits to his People. (b) As then from the grounds and reasons of G O D'S commanding the weekly Feast of the Sabbath, (though the Sabbath be now abolished) (i) our Church hath good Authority and Warrant to ordaine one day in seven to be kept holy; and guided by the example of the Primitive Churches, and constant practice of Christians in all ages, observeth and to that purpose ordaineth the first day of the week, under the title of *the Lords Day*: So, from the grounds and reasons of G O D'S commanding the Legall Anniversary Feasts, (though those Feasts be now abolished,) our Church hath good Authority and Warrant to ordaine solempne dayes of thanksgiving for G O D'S extraordinary benefits; and guided by the example of the Primitive Churches and constant practice of Christians in all ages, observeth and to that purpose ordaineth (amongst other Feasts) the 25. day of *December*, under the title of *the day of Christs Nativity*.

Q U A E R E V.

Whether you can cleare the Celebration of that day by Univerfall tradition?

A N S W E R.

This Word *Univerfall* must here be taken in a safe sense: For, as of Doctrine, so say Divines of Tradition; to make it *Univerfall*, it is not requisite, that all Christians should professe it throughout every age; for then, no Doctrine can be styled *Catholicque* or *Univerfall*, because there is no Doctrine which hath not at some time or other, through weaknesse of Judgement, pride of wit, or selfe-ends, beene drawne into question, if not opposed; (k) *there must be Heresies*, (l) and *false Prophets* ever were and will be. (m) But that Tradition is truly termed *Univerfall*, unto which the Fathers, Martyrs and godly men of the Christian Church have in all Ages, to this present time borne witnesse, (n) both by exhortations and examples: And such is the Tradition of Solemnizing our Saviours Birth-day; as we have abundantly proved in our fifth Section, whereto wee referre.

(k) Procopius li.
3. Goth.
(l) 1 Cor. 11. 19.
(m) 1 John. 4. 1.
(n) Vincen Ler.
contra haerel.
cap. 3.

Q U A E.

QUÆRE VI.

Whether (in this case it can be evidenced by none of these, viz. plaine Text, solid Inference, universall Tradition) it be not a meere humane invention, and so Will-worship? And how you will one day acquit your selves before God, for placing and crying up meane Inventions, instead of the Institutions of Jesus Christ? And whether it were not faithfull dealing with poore simple people to tell them that you have neither of these to warrant it?

ANSWER.

Falſe it is and ſlanderous, that we cry up the Celebration of this day as an *Institution of Jesus Christ*: And yet, we doe and muſt deny it to be a *meere humane invention and Will-worship*; becauſe the Obſerving thereof is not onely approved by *Universall Tradition*, but (as we ſhewed before) hath Sacred Authority and Scripture-warrant in the *Generall*, though not in *ſpeciall*; (o) Of which kinde are, *Set-Faſts, weekly or monthly Lectures, daily Prayer with our Families, the ſinging of Davids Pſalmes in meeſter by a whole Congregation*, and divers other Chriſtian practices: (p) Whereas that worſhip which the Apoſtle calleth *Will-worship* and condemneth, is wholly deſtitute of Scripture-warrant as well *Generall* as *ſpeciall*, and hath no other ground and originall but the vaine opinion, will and phanſie of men; as, *The worſhipping of Angels, and placing an abſolute holineſſe and neceſſity in things indiſſerent* (q) We deſire therefore our *Queriſt* and his followers to conſider well and lay to heart, how they will one day acquit themſelves before GOD, for ſtanding their Brethren, for calling good evil, (r) and crying down that for a meer humane Invention and *Will worship*, which hath Scripture-Authority and the conſent of the Chriſtian Church in all Ages. And were it not faithfull dealing in theſe men, and their apparent duty, to tell poore ſimple People that they have unawares ſlipped into error and miſſed them, and will hereafter (like S. Paul) labour the more abundantly (s) in aſſerting and divulging the Truth.

QUÆRE VII.

Since dayes and times commanded by GOD himſelfe to be obſerved under the Law, were and are unlawfull under the Goſpell; Whether dayes and times commanded by men, and not by GOD, under the Goſpell, are not leſſe lawfull?

ANSWER.

This Scruple is eaſily removed, if wee conſider the different
G
natures

o) See our Answer to the third & fourth Quære.
p) Urſin. Explicat. Catechet. quæſt. 91.
ſection 1. & quæſt. 96.

q) Colof. 2. 18.
21, 22.

r) Ifay 5. 20.

s) 1 Coriſ. 9

natures of those dayes *under the Law* and these *under the Gospel* : They were absolutely necessary, these in themselves are things indifferent ; They were parts of GOD'S publique Worsh^p, these are attendants and *subservient to GOD'S Worship*; (r) They were instituted by GOD himselfe, these are established by Christian Magistrates, *GOD'S Ministers*; (u) They as a *grievous* and unsupportable *Yoke* (w) were abolished at *Christ's Death*, (x) these are things tending to *Decency* and *Order* in the Church, are retained by *Christ's Warrant*. (y) Now, what ground or Reason there is, to inferre the unlawfulness of the latter, from the unlawfulness of the former ; To conclude Gospel-dayes of thank-giving, allowed by CHRIST and set apart by Christian Magistrates, to be unlawfull ; because Legall Feasts, abolished by CHRIST, and which to re-admit is to make CHRIST of no effect, (z) are unlawfull ; Let men of sobriety determine. And here necessary it is to take notice ; though after the Ascension of Christ wee finde the Apostles at some of the Jewish Feasts, as *The Sabbath* and *Pentecost*; (a) Yet did not they observe them as Legall Ordinances, but as things indifferent ; All dayes were to the Apostles alike ; (b) They made no valuation or difference of *first* or *last*, but *every day* of the week they came together, *every day* they prayed, preached, administered the *Sacrament of the Lords Supper*. (b) Indeed *Saint Paul* in a time of famine, (c) did exhort the *Corinthians* (according as he had given Order to the Churches of *Galatia*) that upon the first day of the week, every one should put aside by himselfe, and lay up as GOD had prospered him, for the reliefe of their distressed brethern at *Jerusalem* : (d) But this exhortation gives no preheminence to the first day of the week, nor implies a command, that all Christians should weekly meet on that day to GODS publick Service: The Text speaks onely of giving Almes, *every one* apart by himselfe ; not a syllable of meeting. Or an universall command, or of GODS publick Services, Prayers, Preaching and Sacraments. For by the very words and scope of the Apostle, it is evident, that his Order and Exhortation was particular and temporary, to particular Churches, upon a particular and temporary occasion ; (e) and therefore such regard of the day did onely concern those particular Churches, and that for a time. Who will say, when the

Fa.

1) Urfin, Expli-
cat. Catechet.
quest. 92.

u) Rom 13.4.6

w) Mat. 23. 4

Acs 25. 10

x) Mark. 15.38

John 19. 30

Heb. 9. 10

y) 1 Cor. 14.40

z) Gal. 5.1, 2,
3,4.

a) Acs 2.1. &
13,14,42 & 17
2 & 18.4,21 &
20.16.

b) Rom. 14.3.
5,6,17. Col. 2.
16.

b) Acs 2. 46.
& 5.46.

c) Cornel.
Tacit. lib. 12

d) 1 Cor. 16.
12,13,

e) As was that
in the 20. verse
of the same

Famine was over, that the *Galatians* and *Corinthians* were still bound to send Almes to their Brethren at *Jerusalem*? And might not the *Church* at *Antioch* on the second day of the weeke, the *Saints* at *Philippi* on the third, and the *Brethren* in *Cilicia* on the fourth, give Almes to relieve the wants and necessities of their Brethren at *Jerusalem*, notwithstanding this Order and exhortation of *S. Paul* to the Churches of *Galatia* and *Corinth*? May not wee on the other dayes, as well as the first day of the weeke; yes, on other dayes and not on the first; yes, but once a fortnight or moneth (as occasion shall be) contribute to the relief of our distressed Brethren? Assuredly we may. (w)

Nam nemo compellitur, sed sponte confert. Hac quasi deposita pietatis fuit. Nam inde non alius quare egenis alendis dispensatur. Tertul advers. Gentes.

QUÆRE VIII.

Whether the true and genuine Interpretation of *Christmas* be *Christ-man*? And whether to persuade people 'tis so, be not to abuse and delude them? And whether we may not as well interpret *Candlemas* *Candle-man*, *Michaelmas* *Michael-man*, as *Christmas* *Christ-man*?

ANSWER.

That *Masse* and *Man* are words of the same roote and meaning, is (wee grant) an absurd, vaine and groundlesse conceit; nor doe wee suppose the allegation of *so persuading People*, to be any other then a slanderous figment of our *Quarrel*. For (as wee have shewed above) (e) our English Saxon (f) word *Masse*, is borrowed from the Latine word *Missæ*, and signifies *Publicke service*, *The Lords Supper*, *An Offering*; whereby there appears an excellent and remarkable significancy in this Title *CHRIST-MAS DAY*, implying *THE* day of *Christ's* *Publick Service*, *THE* day of celebrating *Christ's* *holy Communion*, *THE* day of offering up our selves, and thankfulness unto *Christ*; for that *Christ*, the *Son of GOD*, the brightness of his *Fathers* glory, and express image of his *Person*, (g) in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the *God-head* bodily, (h) did vouchsafe for our sakes so low a condescension as to take upon him the forme of a *servant*, (i) and this day to bee borne of a pure *Virgin*. And as for the use of this word *Masse*, we have (by the confession even of those that wave it) the example of *Christians* in the very time of the *Apostles*, (k) the ancient custome and approbation of *GOD'S*

Chapter, *Grow ye like mother with an holy kiss.*

See *May's* Commentary upon *Romans*. 16, 16

w) *Modicam unusquisque stipem menstruat, vel quando velit, et si modo possit, opponit.*

e) See our third Section.

f) Most words of one syllable in English are Saxon originally.

g) *Heb.* 1. 2, 3

h) *Col.* 2. 91

i) *Phil.* 2. 7

k) Vide *Observat.* in *Harm. Confess.* Sect. 14. *Ad August. Arica.*

h) Urbin Expl.
Catechet.

quæst. 80.

m) Lib. 4. ad-
versus Marcia-
nem.

n) Lib. 3 Ep 14

o) Lib. 5. Ep. 33

p) De Tempore.
Sermon. 237.

q) Perkin. vol. 2
Demonstrat. of
the Problem.

Juel. Apolog.
pag. 42.

r) Acts & Mon.
vol. 2. fol. 448.

30. & fol. 451.
60. and fol.

452. 20. 60.

s) Testimon.
Antiq. p. 79.

t) Sleidar.
Comment. l. 6.

f. 101, 102. 109

u) Vide Harm.

Conf. Sect. 14.

Augst. Conf.

Artic. 1.

Church, (f) the Authorities of *Tertullian*, (m) *Cyprian*, (n) *Am-
brose*, (o) *Augustin*, (p) and other eminent Fathers who flour-
ished long before the dayes of Popery: (q) Yea, in a Sermon
on Easter-day translated out of Latin into the Saxon tongue
Anno 996. and in divers Saxon Epistles, (r) before ever the Po-
pish Doctrine of Transubstantiation was heard of in this Island,
we finde the word *Masse*, sometimes expressing *Publick Service*,
sometimes *The Lords Supper*; and Holy-dayes were by the Sax-
ons called *Masse dayes*: because on those dayes GOD'S *Publick
Service* and usually the *Holy Communion* was celebrated. (s)
Wherefore this word *Masse* is neither Popish nor invented by
Papists; and is used not onely in the Church of England, but hath
the testimony of those glorious and renowned Churches of Ger-
many, whose zeale and Protessing for the Faith first acquired to
themselves the name of *Protestants*; (t) *Our Churches*, say they,
are falsely accused that they abolish the Masse; For the *Masse*
(meaning the Lords Supper) is retained with us, and celebrated with
highest reverence. (u) And if words must be therefore cast out
and abominated, because they are profaned by Papists; then
must these words *Scripture*, *Church*, *Baptisme*, *Lords Supper*,
Prayer, *Preaching*, *Sacrament*, *Almes*, *Patience*, and many more
be cast out, which are by them no lesse abused unto superstition,
profaneness, idolatry, then the *Masse*.

Q U E R E IX.

Whether the Saints are bound to rejoice in the Birth of Christ on that day
men superstitiously call *Christmas*, more then at other times? And whe-
ther the Lords day be not THE day appointed for them to rejoice on?

A N S W E R.

It is false, that men superstitiously call this day *Christmas*; for
though they cannot without solid conviction of the unlaw-
fulness, reject the use thereof, yet doe they not place any Re-
ligion in, or esteeme of that Title more then of *Christs Birth-day*,
the Nativity of Christ, *the day of the Nativity*, or the like; which
they ever did and doe use as names indifferent. But for our
speciall joy on that day; if it be the duty of Christians to *beare
the Church*, (w) if in things just the Magistrates commands be
obligations, and men must needs be subject thereunto, not onely
(x) *Rom. 13. 5.* for wrath, but also for conscience sake (x) which no Saints or Chil-
dren

w) Mat. 11. 17.

x) Rom. 13. 5.

dren of GOD will deny; then are *Saints bound* to expresse their *rejoycing in the Birth of Christ*, more especially on this day set apart for this end, then at other times: Doe not we on every fifth of November, [as the Jews did on the dayes of *Purim*] (y) more especially than at other times, declare our joy in GODS temporall deliverance of our State? And if a corporall and temporary mercy unto a Nation may be yearly recorded with Publick joy and thanksgivings unto GOD; much more may we with rejoycings, prayer and praises record GODS spirituall, everlasting and unspeakable mercy in Christs Birth, the good tidings of great joy unto all people (z).

Indeed, the Lords day is appointed for us to rejoyce on; yet is it not THE day, so as to extinguish or lessen our duty on other dayes appointed also to GODS Service. For by whom and when was the Lords day appointed? Throughout the Old Testament we have no intimation of it. *Cyprians* saying, that *Circumcision* was a type or figure of *Christs Resurrection*, and our Solemnity on the eighth day (a) is rather his conceit then judgement; for in that Sacrament neither signe nor actions, bear the least analogy or similitude with Christs rising from the dead. And to speak truly, how can the day of Christs Resurrection be termed the eighth day? In reference to the weeke it was the first day, (b) in reference to his death and buriall the third day; (c) in reference to the month the seventh and twentieth day; (d) and it can no otherwise be termed the eighth, then because it next follows the seventh; just as one is thirteen a clock, because it is the next houre after twelve. Besides, should we admit this Typicall phan- sy, then must the day of Christs Resurrection be no Solemne or Holy day, but a common ordinary day, as was the day of Circumcision; else the type and thing typified will not correspond.

As for the day of the fourth Commandement; that thing may be clearly understood, we must note that the morall Law and the Law of Nature are one and the same; (e) and it is called the Morall Law, that is to say the Law of manners, because it is an everlasting rule for the manners and duties of men, both towards GOD and towards their Neighbour.

Next, we must know, that a Sabbath, is a set time appointed by just Authority to GODS publique service: (f) The Sab-

1) Esther. 9. 18.
19. 18.

2) Luke 2. 10.

a) Lib. 3. Ep. 10.
ad Fidum. Circumcision was on the eighth day, because the child was unclean till the eighth day.
Levit. 12. 2. 3.

& 15. 19. 24.

b) Mark. 16. 9.

c) Mat. 12. 40.

John 2. 19.

d) Aug. de Trin.

1. 4. c. 5. Chrysos-

top. in c. 1. Luc.

e) Pol. Synag.

Theol. lib. 6. cap.

10. fol. 1267.

Bucan Loc. com.

19. Sect. 11. Ju-

nius. Theol. Theol.

loc. 23. St. W.

R. Hist. 1. 2. c. 4.]

Sect. 9.

f) Ursin. Expl.

Car. q. 28. 103

g) See our
proofes at the
end of our ans.
to this *Quest*
Calvin, init. l. 2.
c. 8. Sect. 2. 8.
31. Zemb. in
Expl. Præcept.
4. *Ufin*. in
Tract. Theol.
de Præcept. 4.
Simler. ad Exod.
20. *Param* ad
Ro. 14. dub. 4.
Polan. Synt.
Theol. l. 6. c. 10
i) Rom. 2. 14, 15
Feneft. c. de Sac
cerdot. *Rafin*.
Antiqu Rom.
l. 3. & 4. *Grim-*
ston. *Edwards*. ff.
254. 255. 758.
739. 771. 778.
k) Compare
Luke 23. 56.
with Ex. 20. 11
l) Levit. 23.
m) Deut. 5. 15.
n) Exod. 31. 19.
o) Ephes. 2. 14.
p) Exod. 31. 13.
Hebr. 4. 4, 5. 9.
10. 11.
q) Col. 2. 16, 17
r) Col. 2. 14, 16, 17

s) *Polan*. Synt.
Theol. lib. 6. c.
12. fol. 22. 63. D.
t) See the *Præ-*
face of *Piety*.

Sabbath is a Sabbath under the Law by GOD'S command to be weekly observed on the seventh day: *The Lords day* is a Sabbath under the Gospel by the Churches Authority (g) to be weekly observed on the first day: So that *the Sabbath* and *the Lords day* differ specifically, that is, are of distinct natures and kinds. Hence it is, that the fourth Commandement is partly *Morall*, partly *Ceremoniall*. (h) *Morall and Naturall*, in that it commandeth a Sabbath or set time to be appointed for GOD'S publike service: unto which by the secret instinct of nature all people and Nations, though never so heathenish, barbarous, and ignorant of the true GGD; did and doe by their customes and practice bear witnesse. (i) *Ceremoniall*, in that it commandeth *The Sabbath* or *seventh* and last day of the weeke, on which GOD rested from his works of Creation to be kept holy (k) And that this was *Ceremoniall* appeareth, First, Because the Lord himselfe numbring the *Ceremoniall* Feasts, placeth *the Sabbath* in the very front and head of them. (l) Secondly, Because *the Sabbath* was a particular remembrance to the Israelites of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. (m) Thirdly, Because *the Sabbath* was to distinguish and divide the Jewes from the Gentiles; (n) which middle wall of partition, Christ, our peace, both broken downe. (o) Fourthly, Because, *the Sabbath* was a type or signe of sanctification and spirituall rest by the promised *Messiah*, (p) the substance & accomplishment of what was shadowed. (q) Lastly, The Apostles prohibition of the necessary observance and Divine esteeme of *the Sabbath daies*, (r) without excepting *the seventh day*, is a cleare proof against the old *Sabbatarians*; And as well that prohibition as the lawfull change of *the Sabbath* or *Seventh day* of the weeke, which is our *Saterday*, into *the Lords day* or first day of the weeke which is our *Sunday*, are manifest proofes against the New *Sabbatarians*, that *the Sabbath day* was *Ceremoniall*: For we must not, we cannot suppose that the Apostle should perswade Christians to a light esteeme of any part of the *Morall Law*; nor could that which is *Morall* be changed. (s)

Groundlesse then and erroneous is the Opinion, as well of the Old *Sabbatarians*, who teach that *THE seventh day* is *Morall*, as of the New *Sabbatarians* who would have *A seventh day* *Morall*; (t) For by the dictates and discourse of meer *Naturall* reason

reason, neither *the seventh* nor *a seventh* has more evidence to be kept holy than *the* or *a fifth*, sixth, eighth, tenth, twentieth day: And we challenge all Sabbatarians, Old or New, to deliver freely their Judgment and Conscience, whether if they had never seen or heard of the Scriptures, they could by the Booke of Nature have found out, that GOD in sixe dayes finished the Creation, rested on the seventh, and therefore ordained *the* or *a seventh day* to be weekly kept holy; If they say, *they could*, let them shew it, and the learned will for ever do them homage. If they say, *they could not*, as most certainly they cannot, then is neither *the* nor *a seventh dayes* Observation Morall: Much lesse Morall is *the first day of the week* or *Lords day*, of which there is not the least tittle or glimpse in the fourth Commandment. 'Tis true, in this age and land of Novelty, some Reasons and fetch'd circumstances have been dispersed among the people, to perswade the Morality of *the* or *a seventh*, and thence to insinuate the Morality of *the Lords day*; but the shallownesse and ill composure of their Arguments is so obvious, even to men of indifferant capacity, that we shall onely touch upon the chiefe, whereby the rest may be judged.

REASON I. If the Observation of neither *the* nor *a seventh day* be Morall; then are there but nine Commandments in the Morall Law.

ANSW. The Inference is false; For (wee have proved) the Morality of the fourth Commandment consists not in observing *the* or *a seventh day*, but in *keeping holy a sabbath day* or time set apart to GODS publick Service, which is our bounden and perpetuall duty.

REAS. II. The Sabbath was instituted in Paradise, whilest Adam retained his innocency and perfection; therefore *the Sabbath* is not Ceremoniall.

ANSW. This is often urged by our New Sabbatarians; though duly considered, it makes nothing at all to their purpose; For should we grant, *the Sabbath* or *seventh day* of the week to be Morall and unchangable, then what would become of their *New Sabbath*? But indeed, the Antecedent is false; For at the soonest, GOD did not institute *the Sabbath* till he rested, and that was on *the seventh day*: (u) whereas Adam fell on the day of his

Dr. Twisse,
Walker, Ley,
Shepherd, Nichol-
as & Rich.
Byfeld, Mar-
tindale, Abbot
in their Trea-
tises of the
Sabbath.
Scudder in his
Christians daily
walk, Doctor
Young in his
Dies Dominica,
&c.

u) Gen. 2.2.3.

m) Compare
Gen. 2. 7. 22;
22, &c. 3. 1.
with chap. 1.
27. 28.

x) Chap. 3. 8.
24. See the
Practice of
Piety, printed
by R. Y. p. 274.
Willst his six-
fold Comment.
on Gen. c. 3. 9.
32. The Annot.
of the Assemb.
of Divines on
Gen. 3. 24.

y) Gen. 4. 3, 4.
& 8. 10. & 17.
9. 10.

z) A.C. 15. 24.
28, 29. Galat.
5. 2. Hebr. 9. 9,
10.

a) Joseph. con-
tra Apo. lib. 1.
Brerewoods
Enquiries
chap. 12.

b) *Ita naturale
est quod apud
omnes homines
eandem habet
potensiam.* Ari-
sto. lib. 5. Ethic.

c) In the He-
brew tongue, *s*
sabbath signifies
rest: Whence
as the Latines
from the
Greek, so the
English from
the Latines, have a *Sabbatisme*, so *sabbatize*, which signifies a *resting*, to *rest*. And did Printers
distinguish the Noun Appellative *sabbath* from the proper Name *The Sabbath*, by a great let-
ter, as in all languages they ought to do: our New Sabbatharians might finde the Lords day,
called *sabbathum*, a *sabbath* or *rest*; seldom or never, *Sabbathum*, the *Sabbath*.

his creation, which was the sixth day, (w) and at Evening was cast
out of Paradise. (x)

REAS. III. The Sabbath was appointed before Moses his time;
Therefore the Sabbath was not ceremoniall.

ANSW. We deny the consequence; For *Sacrifices* and *Cir-
cumcision* were appointed long before Moses, (y) yet were they
ceremoniall and abolished in Christ. (z)

REAS. IV. Heathens observed the seventh day as an holy day;
Therefore the seventh dayes observation is Morall and Naturall.

ANSW. This Argument is likewise false; for such Heathens
had not the seventh dayes observation by instinct of Nature, but
by imitation from the Jews, as some amongst them had and still
have *Circumcision* and *Sacrifices*: (a) And that is not Naturall
which some people, but what all observe; (b) which never was
nor will be proved of the seventh day.

REAS. V. The word Sabbath signifies rest; The Lords day is a
rest: Therefore the Lords day may be called THE Sabbath. And
if it may be called The Sabbath, then it is The Sabbath.

ANSW. This is a syllogisme of the fourth Figure, absurd and
ridiculous; For in the same way, John might be called Adam,
because the word Adam signifies man, (c) and John is a man: So
might S. Dunstons, be called The Temple, because the word temple
signifies Church, and S. Dunstons is a Church: And as to the latter
Inference; it is as wise as the former; For who sees not that
sometimes through craft, sometimes through ignorance, things
may be called what indeed they are not? A man may call copper,
Gold; yet it followes not that it is Gold. But we list not to spend
time in breaking strawes, and therefore we shall not pursue this
point, nor take any strict survey of the manifold contradictions,
falsities and notorious riss-raff, wherewith most of our New
Sabbatarian Treatises abound: Only, we desire these profound
Sophisters to study well the first leaf of their *Accidence*, and they
will finde a difference between *Proper Names* and *Common*. Now
from the foregoing premises this conclusion is evident; That since
the Morall part of the fourth Commandement enjoynes only a

sabbath

Sabbath, not any particular and precise day to G O D's publick Service; And the ceremoniall part enjoyned only *The Sabbath* or *seventh day* on which G O D rested from his work of creation; Therefore *the Lords day* or *first day* of the week on which *Christ* rose from the grave, is not by the fourth commandment appointed to be kept holy.

Nor doe the Gospels make any mention of the observing the Lords day. Those propheticall words of our Saviour, *'Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day* (c) though we would prove them undeniably to be *Figurative* (d) and are so understood by some of the new Sabbatarians: (e) yet taken literally, import no more but that *the Sabbath*, or *seventh day*, was kept at the time of *Jerusalems* destruction, (f) about thirty nine years after the death of *Christ*; (g) Which is most true; As also to this very day the Jewes observe it with other Mosaicall Rites, and ceremonies. But what is their superstitious and unwarranted keeping *The Sabbath* or *seventh day* of the week, to the Christians celebration of *the Lords day* or *first day* of the week? Indeed, the Evangelist *S. John* specifies two severall times wherein *Christ* after his Resurrection appeared to his Disciples, when they were assembled. One was, *at evening the same day he rose from the dead, being the first day of the week*; (h) But this Text affords no foundation at all for their conceit, who would have the Disciples then assembled to celebrate the day of *Christ's* Resurrection; For,

1. The day was *spent*, or very little of it remaining, before they assembled. (i)

2. The Scriptures expressly tell us, why they met, *they were assembled for feare of the Jewes*; (k) and what they did being met, *they sapt together, and their meat was broiled fish and an hony comb*: (l) Here's not a word of *Praying*, *Preaching*, and other solemn duties requisite to a solemne day.

3. The coming of *Mary Magdalene* and others to the Sepulchre and bringing *spices*, with intent to anoint our Saviours Body; (m) And the travelling of the two Disciples from *Jerusalem* to *Emmans* upon their private occasions, (n) are clear testimonies that that day was in their repute a common ordinary day.

4. And lastly, the Disciples at their first assembling, did not believe

c) Mat. 24. 10.

d) August. de

consenti. Evan-

gel. lib. 2. c. 77.

e) Rich. Byfield:

Doctrin of

the Sabbath, p.

212.

f) Compare

Mat. 24. vers 3.

with ver. 10.

g) Joseph. de

Bel. Judaico,

l. 7. Jun. com-

ment. in

Chronol. l. 5.

h) John 20. 9.

i) 19.

j) Compare

Luk. 24. 29. 33.

with John 20.

19.

k) John 20. 19.

l) Luk. 24. 33.

41, 42.

m) Mar. 16. 12.

n) Luk. 24. 13.

- o) Luk. 24. 11. *Heve the Resurrection of Christ; (o) and therefore when Christ appeared unto them as they sat at meat, he upbraided them herein, with their unbelief and hardness of heart: (p) How then could it be, that the cause of their assembling was to celebrate the day of Christs Resurrection?*

The other time wherein Christ did appeare to his Disciples assembled, was (saith the foresaid Evangelist) *after eight dayes; (q) which word after shewes that the eight dayes were fully compleat and ended, and so this meeting of the Disciples falls on the ninth day; * Now account Nine, either including the day of Christs Resurrection, and their meeting was on the second day of the second weeke; Or, Nine from the time of his former appearance to his Disciples, excluding the day of his Resurrection [which is more probably the sense of the Gospel] then was their meeting on the third day of the second weeke; and it can no way be assigned to the first day of the week, unless we say as our new Sabbatarians, that after eight dayes must be interpreted, before eight dayes, to wit, on the seventh, which is most ridiculous.*

Come we to the *Acts*, and we read not there, that the Apostles did practice or appoint the Observation of the first day of the weeke above the rest: *It seems good* [say they unanimously in that famous Synod at Jerusalem] *to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay NO FURTHER BURTHEN upon you THEN THESE NECESSARY THINGS, that ye abstaine from things offered to Idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from Fornication.* (r) As for that meeting of Paul and the Disciples at Troas; (s) whether we respect the time or the end of their meeting, it makes nothing at all to the celebration of the Lords day. The time is exprest to be upon the first day of the weeke when the Disciples came together to break bread, which all Divines grant to be at evening (t) on Sunday night; and, saith the Text, they continued together till break of day. (u) Now what is this to the Lords Day? Did the first Christians or must we keep our weekly Feasts from the Evening on Sunday night till break of day on Monday? certainly none will say it: Besides, it is a sacred principle with some of the New Sabbatarians, (w) that the time of celebrating the Lords day, does continue no longer then till the Evening, according to the old Leviticall rule, from even

- q) Joh. 20. 26.

* Note, It is a received Rule amongst all Divines skilful in Chronology, that the expressions of time in Sacred Scriptures, ought ever to be taken in the fullest sense, unless by other Texts the necessity of a limitation shall be proved.

- r) Acts 15. 28, 29.

- s) Acts 10. 6. 7.

- t) Mat. 26. 20.

- Mark. 14. 17.

- u) Acts 20. 7.

- 11.

- w) Shepherds Doctr. of the Sab part. 3. Thel. 76. 77. 90.

even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbath: (*) How then can it be said without a contradiction to themselves, that this meeting of the Disciples at or in the Evening, when the time of celebration was past, was to celebrate the Lords day? And for the end of their meeting, Prayer, Preaching, receiving the Lords Supper, heavenly conference; these were to the Disciples (not weekly, but) daily-ordinary exercises; (w) and if from thence should follow a necessity of keeping the day holy, then must every day be kept holy, which is repugnant to GOD's Commandement, (x) the Doctrine of the Apostles, (y) and common reason.

In all those Sacred Epistles of Paul, (z) James, Peter, John, Jude, we have not one syllable of the Lords day. That of the Apostle Heb. 4.9. is not spoken of a weekly temporary rest, but of another; (z) a rest which he exhorteth us to strive to enter into by faith; (a) a rest in the heavens into which Christ Jesus our high Priest is passed before us. (b) This rest (say Interpreters) is a Spiritual rest, (c) begun in this life by ceasing from sin and doing righteousness; but perfectly & everlastingly continued in life eternal: (d) Which is so clearly the sense of the Apostle, that it is confessed by some of our New Sabbatarians (e)

'Tis true, S. John who wrote his Booke called *The Revelation* about the year of Christ 96, (f) which was long after the decease of the rest of the Apostles, saith, that he was in the spirit, or, (as some translations have it) he was ravished in the spirit on the Lords day: (g) Which shews indeed there was some day then called the Lords day, and of note in the Christian Church. But, whether that day were an Holy-day or not; or, if an Holy-day, whether weekly or Anniversary; or, if weekly, whether on the first day of the week, the day of our Lords Resurrection, or on the sixth day of the week, they day of our Lords Passion; (which was the weekly Holy-day in most Grecian Churches untill the reign of Constantine*) S. Iohn is wholly silent. And for the celebration thereof, he neither commands it nor commends it to us; but as he found it, so he leaves it, a thing indifferent.

Wherefore we conclude, that the observation of the Lords day hath no precept, no practice, throughout the Scriptures; and consequently is no day appointed by GOD, Christ, or his Apostles to be kept holy.

*) Levit. 23. 32.

w) A& 2. 42.

46. and 5. 42.

x) Exod. 20. 9.

y) Ephel. 4. 28.

z) Thel. 3. 10.

12.

2) That place

in the 1 Cor.

16. 1, 2, 3. is

cleared in our

Answer to the

17th Query.

2) Ver. 8. 9.

2) Verse 11.

b) Verse 14.

c) Bez. annor. in

locum.

com. 39. Sect. 16

d) Ursin Explan-

cat. Cat. q. 103:

Sect. 1. Baxter

in his Saints c-

verlasting Rest.

chap. 2.

e) R. Byfields

Doctrine of

the Sabbath.

p. 210.

f) Irenaeus

contra Hæret.

lib. 5.

g) Rev. 1. 10.

sui spiritus cor-

reptus. So Bez.

21.

*) About the year

324. Vid.

Fune. Com-

me. in Chron.

l. 3. NOTE, that

2) S. Iohn wrote

his Revelation,

is a Greeke

Island.

Here some may aske ; When then began the Lords day to be observed ? Who appointed it ? and upon what grounds was it appointed ? We answer to the first ; though *the exact time be not recorded, When Christians began to keep holy the Lords day ;* h yet from that of *John i* (understood according to the Tradition generally received) we may gather, the observing thereof is very ancient, and was sometime before *John* wrote that Book : k And it hath been undeniably observed by *G o d s Church* in all succeeding ages to this day. To the second we answer ; The Observation of the Lords day is appointed by the Christian Church. *The Church* (saith *Orsin*) out of her own will and pleasure chose the first day of the week for certain reasons l. *The Church* (saith *Bullinger*) of her selfe freely chose and received the day of *Christs Resurrection* instead of the Sabbath : We read not that it is any where commanded. m *The Christian Church* (saith *Peter Martyr*) did not amisse when she appointed the Lords day to be observed instead of the Sabbath. * *GOD* (saith *Bastingius*) for a cause fitly serving the times of the appearing of the *Messias*, did disannull that Law of the seventh day, and left it free for his Church to make use of other days, which for a probable cause chose the first day upon which fell the Resurrection of *Christ*. † We affirme (saith *Peter du Moulin*) all the Doctrines of the Christian Faith are contained in the Scriptures : The Observation of the Lords day is not a Doctrine, but a Law of Church Government. n *The Church* (saith *Napier*) transported the exercise of Saturday to the Sunday. o *The Church* (saith *Willet*) changed the Holy day of rest from the seventh day to the first, which is the Lords day p. But, we shall not insilt upon the testimonies of particular men, since we have herein the concurrent Judgement of all Protestant Churches, as may be seen at large in *The Harmony of Confessions* ; o Take thereout one instance ; It is apparent (saith *Ausburg*) that the Church appointed the Lords day to the end, th t people should know when to meet together ; and whosoever do thinke that by the Churches Authority, the Observation of the Lords day was ordained instead of the Sabbath, as necessary, do very much erre. p To the third Demand we answer ; That the Church upon just Grounds hath appointed the Lords day to be kept holy ; Which Grounds are these. First, the Morality of the fourth Commandment

h *Quo tempore christiani dicunt Dominicum festum variari ceperint, non est memorie proditum.* Magdeburg. Cent. 1. lib. 2. cap. 6. i *Revel. 1. 10.* k *Ley, Sunday a Sabbath ch. 4.* l *Ex arbitrio elegit.* Ursin. f. xpl. Car. q. 103. Sect. 1. m *Bullinger in Apocalyp. c. 1. concione. 4.* * *Pet. Martyr. Theol. in Exod. 20.* † *Bastingius. Expof. Caract. 4. præcepti.* n *Pet. de Moulin in his Treat. of Tradit. ch. 20.* o *See Napier notes on Revel. chap. 1.* p *Willetts six-fold com. upon Ex. c. 20. quæsit. 14.* o *Sect. 16. & 17.*

p See the *Ausburg Confess.* in the Appendix to the *Harm. of Confess.*

mandement requireth set dayes and times to GODS publike Service; and therefore the Christian Church for the performance of this Commandment, and according to *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free*, (g) did amongst other dayes, set apart the Lords day to GODS Service: (r) And in respect of this Generall Warrant it is, that Divines do frequently say, *the Observation of the Lords day hath Authority from GODS Commandment*. Secondly, the Equity of the seventh dayes Observation under the Law, obliged the Church to set apart the seventh day under the Gospell: For it were disproportionable and an utter shame, that Christians in their duties and Thanksgivings to GOD should come short of those that were under the Law when their benefits are much greater (r) Thirdly, the Church, not placing any holiness in dayes, nor from an opinion of the necessity of keeping one day rather then another, did out of her owne judgement, freely and voluntarily chuse *the first day of the weeke* for our seventh dayes Solemnity *: and this free choice of the Church is in part acknowledged by some New Sabbatharians; I professe (saith one of them) *that I doe not conceive there is any morall necessity, that that day of the weeke on which Christ Rose from the Grave: should be kept holy in the Christian Church, rather then the day wherein he was Borne, or the day wherein he Suffered on the Crosse, or the day wherein he Ascended into Heaven* (s). Howbeit, though no injunction or necessity be laid on the Church, yet she wanted not certaine perswasive reasons and inducements, for refusing the *last day of the weeke*, and making choice of the *first*. Two reasons shee had for refusing the *last day of the weeke*; One was, that by not-observing the Sabbath-day, Christians might understand they are now freed from the Yoke of the ceremoniall Law: (t) The other was, that hereby a difference and distinction might be put betwixt us and Jews. (u) Likewise the Church had two reasons for making choice of the *first day of the weeke*; One, In memory of the Worlds Creation, which Worke GOD began on that day: (w) The Other, In memory of Christs Resurrection, who on the *first day of the weeke rose from death* (x) And in regard that Christ by his rising againe, did mightily declare himselfe to be the Lord; (y) Therefore the Church called the day of Christs Resurrection the *Lords day*. (z) But here three things

g) Gal. 5. 1.
r) Func. Com.
in Chron. lib. 3,
Anno 324.

r) Bernardin his
Treatise of the
Christian Sabbath,
chap. 9.

* Basting. Ex-
posit. 4. præcepti.

s) Ley, Sunday
Sabbath, p. 12.
t. u) Polan.

Syntag. Theol.
l. 9. c. 35.

w) Gen. 1. 1. 5.

x) Luk. 24. 5. 6

Conventus bon
die Solis faci-
mus, quod hac
d e Deus mun-
dum creavit, &
eadem die Chri-
stus resurrexit à
mortuis. Justu-
nus Apol. 2.
pro Christiani-
s.

y) Rom. 1. 4. 7.

z) Inde à resur-
rectione Christi:

*Ecclesia vocavit
Dominum.
Junius de Ec-
clesi. l. 1. c. 4.*

- a) Mar. 1. 18, 23
b) Read Bishop
And. cws. Sermon
on this Text,
And also the
Annot. of the
Assembly of
Divines.
c) John 1. 29.
& 12. 47. & 19.
17. 18.
d) Anno Dom.
324. Vide
Func. Com. in
Chron. l. 6.
e) Mark 16. 19.
Acts 1. 9, 10.

- f) Athanas. in
Hamil. de se-
mence.
g) *A Domino
sacram.*
Aug. de. verb.
Apost. Scrm. 15
h) Aug. Epist.
119. ad Jan.

are to be noted; First, That the saying, *that Christ by his rising againe did mightily declare himselfe to be the Lord*, and the calling of *Christ's Resurrection day the Lords day*, are spoken by way of *affirmation*, not by way of *appropriation*; as if Christ did at no other time save at his Rising *declare himselfe to be the Lord*, and no day save that of his Resurrection were *the Lords day*; for this is false. Christ, we know, by his Birth of a pure Virgin, (a) *did mightily declare himselfe to be the Lord*, and therefore the day of Christ's Nativity is also *the Lords day*; yea, our Lord himselfe expressly calleth it *His day* John 8. 56. (b) Againe, Christ by his sustaining the wrath of GOD for the sinnes of the whole world, (c) *did mightily declare himselfe to be Lord*, and therefore the day of Christ's Passion is also *the Lords day*; Yea, many of the Primitive Churches for the space of 300. yeares after Christ, observed this day as their weekly Solemnity, untill Constantine by Imperiall Decree limited the Christians, for unity sake, to the observation of *the first day of the weeke* onely. (d) Againe, Christ by his ascending into heaven, in the presence and sight of his Apostles (e) *did mightily declare himselfe to be the Lord*, and therefore the day of Christ's Ascension is also *the Lords day*: So that had the phrase and speech of the Christian Church so determined, the day of Christ's Nativity, Passion, Ascension, or the like, might have bene called *the Lords day* as well as Christ's Resurrection-day is thus called. Our next Observation is, that Christ by his resurrection caused or occasioned *the first day of the weeke* to be kept holy, and hence it is, that some ancient Writers have said, that *Christ changed the Sabbath into the Lords day*, (f) *Christ set the Lords day apart* (g) Not that Christ was the Author of the said change and institutour of *the Lords day*, but that Christ by his Resurrection was the cause or occasion wherefore it was changed and set apart: (h) As we usually say of the fifth of November, *The Papists made this an Holy-day*; not that Papists ordain'd it to be kept holy, but that the Papists by their Powder-plot were the cause or occasion, wherefore the Church and State of England ordained it. The third thing to be noted is, that *Christ's Rising againe* is a part of that work, not the whole worke which he performed for mans Redemption; and is in it selfe no greater nor more beneficiall unto us then his *Incarnation, Birth, Passion,* and

and the like: For, had Christ only Risen againe, and not suffer'd for our finnes, what would his or our Resurrection have availed? Nay, had Christ both suffer'd and risen againe; and not beene incarnate by the Holy Ghost of a Virgin and made man, what had his suffering and Rising againe beene to us? Nay, grant all these, yet if Christ had not Ascended, we could never have attained the end of our hope which is in heaven; for *where the head is, there also must be the members*; and if Christ our head were not in heaven, neither should nor could we expect it.

The result then and summe of all is, that seeing the *Feast of Christs Nativity* hath like warrant and allowance from Scripture as the *Lords day*, hath the same authority for its Institution, is celebrated in memory of as great and wonderfull a work of Christ, and as beneficiall unto us, as his Resurrection; Therefore the *Lords day* is no more nor otherwise *THE day appointed for us to rejoyce on*, then the day of *Christs Nativity*.

Q U E R E X.

Whether *Christmas* day ought in any respect to be esteemed above another of the weeke-dates? And whether people may not without offence to GOD follow their lawfull vocations on that day?

A N S W E R.

From what we have already proved, the solution of this *Quere* is easie and obvious; For, in respect that *Christmas* day being the day of our Lords Nativity, is the *Lords day*; and by his *Sponse*, (i) the Church set apart to Gods publick worship and our soules edification, it ought clearly to be esteemed above any of the common week dates: And for people on this day wilfully and contemptuously to follow their ordinary (though at other times lawfull) vocations or callings, is, in the first place, a breach of the fourth Commandement; for the day of Christs Nativity is a *sabbath*, or rest unto the Lord, (k) and GOD will have us to keep holy the sabbath or rest-day. Next it is despising and a dishonouring of their Mother the Church, which whosoever are guilty of, not only sin against the fifth Commandement; (l) but by our Saviour himself we are enjoyned to account all such as revokers from the Christian Faith, *Heathen men and Publicans*. (m) Lastly, it is a ground schinlet to the violation of all orders & decency in GODS service, which is expressly condemned in Holy Scripture. (n) And

i) Cant. 4.9.

k) See the definition of a Sabbath in our Answ. to the last foregoing *Quere*.

l) Perkins Galts. of Conic. l. 1. c. 5. Sect 5.

m) Mat. 18. 17.

n) 1 Cor. 14. 40.

if

if to break Gods Commandments, to contemne Churches authority, to become Heathens and Publicans, and to overthrow all order and decencie in GODS services be offences to GOD; Then must we conclude, that to work or follow our vocations on *Christmas day*, is a great and high offence unto GOD.

Q U E R E XI.

Whether you think the Parliament and Assembly have erred and played the fooles in condemning and raising our Holy dayes not warranted in the Word? And whether to observe them be not highly to dislike, and flatly to contradict (in point of practice at least) their proceedings in order to a Reformation?

A N S W E R.

Thoughts are free, and every mans minde is to himselfe; yet for satisfaction hereunto, noting by the way the incivility of the terme *Fooles*, we answer, that the Parliament is not truly alleaged in this point; For, First, our *Querist* grounds his allegation upon an Order of the House (n) whereas the *Day of Christs Nativity* and the like are appointed *Holy dayes* by Act of Parliament; (o) and an Order cannot raise out an Act; for it is a *Maxime* (as well in our *English Lawes*, as in the *Civill*) that *what ever it be, the same way it is made, the same way it is dissolved*. (p) Secondly, by our *Querists* owne confession the Order alledged condemnes *Holy dayes not warranted in the Word*; which does nothing at all concerne the *day of Christs Nativity*; the Observation of this day being warranted by the Holy Scripture, (q) instituted by the Apostolick Churches, and practised throughout the Reformed: (r) And therefore to observe this day and the like is not to contradict but to further the *Parliaments proceedings in order to Reformation*; they having often testified, and still doe testifie to the world, that *their guide in the worke of Reformation shall be the word of GOD and the best Reformed Churches*. (s) Thirdly, the procurers of the said Order have bene since detected, secluded the House, and by full consent of Parliament declared to be no other then a party and faction, acted by power of darknesse, Apostates from their first principles, bearing only the name of Patriots and Lovers of Religion, and such Reformers of Popery and prophanesne as stood themselves in need of Reformation: (t) Now, of what price or esteeme these mens Votes and condemnings ought to be, let either conscience

or

n) Aug. 1645:

o) 5. & 6 Ed. 6.

c. 3. 1 Eliz. c. 2.

p) *Nihil est rati-*

oni magis con-

sentaneum quam

eodem modo

utrumquodque

dissolvere, quo

constatum est.

Judge Dode-

ridge this Eng-

lish Lawyer,

pag. 123.

q) See our

Ans. to

Quere 3 & 4.

r) See our 5th.

Section.

s) The Parl.

Decl. Sept. 27.

1649. pag. 10.

t) See the afore

said Decl. pag.

5. 7. 10.

or reason determine. As for the Assembly of Divines, it is well knowne how they were chosen, and that their number does not much exceed 80. Persons; (u) Unto which we shall say no more but what one of their Abettors and Favourites hath long agoe beene forced to acknowledge; *There is (saith hee) no resolution from any Apostolicall primitive pattern of the Churches erected by the Apostles, of an Assembly SO CHOSEN BY MAGISTRATES,* (w) to draw up a Government and Direction in Worship for so many Churches, (x) many of which Churches have not so much as one of their members there. (y)

u) Edwards his Antipologia, p. 256.

w) For the Parl. did nominate the Divines of the Assembly.

x) There are above 12000. Parish-Churches in this Common-wealth.

y) Edwards his Antipologia, p. 83.

z) See our 6th. Section.

a) Alias the Minister and his Eldership.

Q U A E R E X I I.

Whether (since most men and women in England doe blindly and superstitiously believe, Christ was born on that day) preaching on it doth not nourish and strengthen them in that believe?

A N S W E R.

'Tis true; most men and women in England, and indeede all Christian Churches throughout the world doe believe that Christ was borne on the 25. day of December; but this they doe neither blindly nor superstitiously. Not blindly; For they have plenty of ancient Records and the cleare Testimonies both of the Greek and Latin Fathers, and other Ecclesiasticall Writers, which beare witnesse thereunto: (a) Nor superstitiously; For they hold it no point of Religion or Article of faith; and therefore our Querist needs not feare that preaching on this day will nourish any matter of dangerous consequence. But, Good GOD! how quick-sighted are our Opponents in other mens wayes, and how pur-blinde in their owne? VVhat talke they of superstition? Was there ever read or heard of a more superstitious generation then themselves? Doe not most of them teach, that it is unlawfull to administer the Sacraments on any other day, then the Lords day, and in any other place then the Church? Doe not most of them teach, that it is unlawfull to receive the Communion, without being confessed and approved by the Priest and his Consistory? (a) Doe not most of them teach, that it is unlawfull to ring the Bells in peale upon the Lords day; To eat Mince-pies, Plumb-porridge, or Brawn in December; To trim the Church or private house with Holly and Ivy about Christmas, or to strew it with Rushes about Midsummer; To stick a roasting piece of Beeffe with Rosemary; or to stick a sprigge of Rosemary in a Collar of Brawne when it is brought to the Table; To play at

Cards or Bowles; To hawk or hunt; To give money to a servants or apprentices Boxe, or to send a couple of Capons or any other present to a friend in the Twelve-dayes; to use a ring in the Solemnization of Marriage; To cover a Herse with a white sheet; and a thousand such like foppish superstitious conceits, which to reckon up would be long and needlesse.

Q U E R E XIII.

Whether this *Feast* had not its rise and growth from Christians conformity to the mad Feasts *Saturnalia*, (kept in *December* to *Saturne* the Father of Gods) in which there was a Sheafe offered to *Ceres* Goddess of Cornes; a hymne in her praise called *Ψαλμ* or *Ψαλμ*? And whether those Christians by name, to cloake it, did not afterwards call it *Tule*, and *Christmas*, as though it were for Christs honour? And whether it be not yet by some (more ancient then truly or knowingly religious) called *Tule*, and the mad playes or sports (wherewith 'tis celebrated, like those *Saturnalia*) *Tule-games*? And whether from the offering of that Sheafe to *Ceres*; from that song in her praise; from those gifts the Heathens gave their friends in the Calends in *January*, *omnis gratia*, did not arise or spring our *Blazes*, *Christmas* *Kailes*, and *New years* gifts?

A N S W E R.

This *Quere* containeth a pack of grosse errors and vaine imaginations, taken out of a new phantasticall *Almanack*; (b) The truth whereof our *Querist* should have done well to have examined, before he had swallowed it. As for our *Feast* of the Nativity, it had its rise from the practise of the pure, ancient and Apostolique Church; and its growth from Christians conformity to the said practice; which we have fully and at large proved in our fifth Section. Those *Feasts* to *Saturne*, which began on the 17. of *December*, and lasted three dayes, (c) concerne not us; unless our Opponents will say, that Christians may not set a day apart to GODS Service in that moneth that Heathens had Feasts; and if so, we must bid adieu to all publique Services of GOD. The story of offering a Sheafe to *Ceres* and of a hymne in her praise at the *Feast* of *Saturne*, is down-right false; for that offering and hymne to *Ceres* was at her own Fealt, which was in *April*: (d) And by consequence those derivations of *Tule* from *Ψαλμ* and *Kariles* from *Ceres* are ridiculous; and savour of as much wit, as that of *Tarleton* to the School-boys of *Westminster*, when he told them, that *Napkin* came from *Nepwne*, and *Trencher* from his *Trident*. (e) But no marvaile, these men should be so ignorant from whence the words come, when they know not how to spell them; for in true spelling it is not *Tule*, but *Ule*; not *Kariles*, but *Carrolles*: And that our Opponents

b) the Almanack is entitled, A Scripture Almanack.

c) Apud majores nostros Saturnalia die uno finiebantur, qui erat ad quarum decimum Calendas Ianuarias: sed postquam C. Cæsar hunc mensis duos addidit dies (sexto decimo capta celebrari. Macrobi. Satur. l. i. c. 10. Vid. etiam Giraldi Galindarium ad finem. lib. Ovid. Fast.

d) Ante tamen, quam summa dies spectacula finit; Euphysor Orion aquare versus erit, Proxima viñtrem cum Romæ insperaretis. Eoma

—Circus e. ris pompa celebr —hinc Ceres lud. Ovid. Fastorum. l. 4.

e) The Treasure of Wit, pag. 35.

nents may have the just Original of these words, they must understand, that the French call *Christmas Noël*, from the Latine word *Novus* which signifies *New*, because the New-year begins at *Christmas*. (f) From *Novel* the people of *Normandy*, who speake a corrupt kinde of French, have their word *Nuel*; And from *Nuel* together with the *Norman* conquest, the English had *Nule* or *Ule*; (g) both which words were indeed used at this day in some of the Northerne parts of this Land. * The other word *Caroll*, comes from *cantare* which signifies to sing, and *Rola* an Interjection expressing joy; for heretofore in the burden of delightfull songs, and when men were jocund, they were wont to sing *Rola, Rola*; as, sometimes we doe *Heyda, Heyda*; or *Derry, Derry*. Now, where lies the impiety of those words? Where lies their Heathenisme? But we finde this is no new trick; wee have examples enough (and too many some will say, when they must give an account) of slandering GODS people and Services in this kinde: *Plutarch* tells us, that the ancient *Jewes* (with whom no doubt was GODS true Religion) did sacrifice to *Ceres* and *Bacchus*; and that from *Sabasis*, one of the names of *Bacchus*, they called their Feasts *Sabbaths*. (g) *Iosephus* tels of a figment no lesse monstrous; That when the *Jewes* came out of *Egypt*, at the end of every sixe daies journey they were troubled with ulcers and sores in their groines, and for that cause rested the seventh day; and being settled and sound in the Land of *Iudea* they called that day, the *Sabbath*, from the Egyptian word *Sabbatosis*, which signified a disease in the groine: (h) And certainly one egge is not more like another, then these are to the conceits of our Opponents. As to their four superstitious scruples propounded in the close of this *Quære*; We answer to the first, concerning *Ule-games* or *Christmas sports*, that the body is GODS; as well as the spirit; (i) and therefore why should not GOD be glorified by shewing forth the strength, quicknesse, and agility of our body, as well as by declaring the endowments of our spirit? Provided alwaies, the said exercises be according to Chriitian modesty and in due seasons. To the Second, concerning *Blazes*, we answer, That a great fire, little fire, no fire, are equally materiall to the Celebration of *Christmas*; and yet, why may not *Blazes* be then allowed in our chymneys, as well as Bonfires in our streets on the fifth of *November*? To the Third, concerning *Christmas Carrolles*, wee

f) *Wid. David. Chytraï Disposit. Epist. sub initio.*
g) *Wid. Horat. Laimonii Disti- onar. Latino- Anglo. Gal.*
* in *York-shire; Lancashire, Durham, &c.*

g) *Plutarch in symposiacis.*

b) *Ioseph contra Ap. lib. 2.*

i) *1 Cor. 6. 20.*

k) Ut quisque de Scripturis sanctis, vel de proprio ingenio potest, provocatur in medium DEO canere. Tertul. lib. adversus gentes, cap. 39.
l) Est. 9. 19. 22.
m) See their Annotation on Ester 9. 22.

answer, That it was an ancient custome amongst the Christians in their Feasts, *to bring every one into the midst & incite him to sing unto GOD as well as he could, either out of the holy Scriptures, or of his owne wit and invention* : (k) And why was this course of singing more lawful in those daies then now? To the Fourth, concerning *New-years gifts*, we answer, that we have Scripture-example for *sending gifts or portions one to another on daies of Feastings* : (l) And this we then was (say the Assembly of learned Divines) for the maintenance of mutual friendship. (m) How come such gifts to be since unlawful?

Q U E R E XIV.

Whether conformity to, and retention of Heathenish Customes be commendable in Christians, suitable or agreeable with Gospel-principles, though under pretext of Christs Honour and Worship?

A N S W E R.

It is a most wicked slander, that we solemnize the day of Christs Nativity under a pretext onely and shew of Christs honour and worship; For with all sincerity and singlenesse of heart wee dedicate both the day and our selves on that day to the publique Worshipping of GOD, the honouring of Christ, and to a thankfull contemplation of those infinite and unestimable benefits, which accrue unto us by Christs marvellous Birth of a Virgin: Nor is this from any Heathenish Customes, but from the evident examples of GODs Church throughout all ages, ever since Christianity hath been professed. (n) And here we shall give our Opponents a Lesson which would be wel learned and remembered, *that it does not straightway follow, because Heathens do it, the thing done is Heathenish, and not suitable with Gospel principles*: For, the Principles of the Gospell doe confirme, not destroy the Principles of nature; and therefore Heathens by the light of naturall reason have done and doe many excellent things and commendable in Christians.

n) See our fifth Section.

o) Rom. 2. 14, 15.

(o) We finde upon Record, the *Temperance, Chastity, Prudence*, and other Virtues of Heathens; and yet no man can say, that *Temperance, Chastity, Prudence*, are Heathenish, and not suitable to Gospel-principles. We read that Heathens do *Marry, Bury, Build Churches*; and yet no man can say, that *Marriage, Buriall of our dead, Building of Churches*, are Heathenish and not suitable to Gospel principles. Yes, manifest it is, and some of the New Sabbatarians confesse, (p) that the Heathens observed the seventh day for a *Holy-day and Festivall*; (q) and yet they will not say, that the observation of the seventh day is Heathenish and not suitable to Gospel-principles.

p) Rich: Byfields Doctrin of the Sab. p. 81, 82.
q) Joseph contr. Ap. l. 1. & Phil. Judæus l. 2. de vita Moïsis,

Q U E R E

QUÆRE XV.

Whether you are not bound to prove your practice by the conviction and satisfaction of your Brethren, whose duty it is to walke with you in things agreeable to the mind of Christ? And in case you cannot? Whether you ought not to acknowledge your error, lay down your practice (as others have done theirs) no longer befooing and misleading the People?

ANSWER.

Indeed, putting the case as our *Querist* doth, that we cannot prove the lawfulness of our practice; 'tis granted, we ought to acknowledge our error and lay down our practice: But in case we can prove, as it is manifest we have proved that our practice hath the approbation of GOD's Word, & the example of Christians in the Primitive and purest times, the witness of the ancient Fathers, the consent of all Reformed Churches; (with which if any thing there be that ever can or will convince and satisfy, men ought to rest satisfied,) then, out of our *Querists* own mouth do we infer, that it is the duty of him and all other our Opponents to walke with us in these things so clearly agreeable to the mind of Christ. And if yet, the good which we have set before them will not prevail; let our Opponents take into their saddest and most serious thoughts the manifold evil which by their non conformity to our practice ariseth both to themselves and the Churches of GOD. First, it abets and gives countenance to Blasphemers; and those so horrid and execrable, that the bare rehearsal of their frequent reproaches against our Christian Solemnities would be unto modest eares offensive: You have a taste hereof in our last Session. Secondly, it will bring to passe, (as S. Augustine long since noted) that in proceſſe of time, by the non-observance of these yearly Solemnities, an ungratefull forgetfulness of the Great benefits of the Son of GOD will steale upon us.* Thirdly, It is a dangerous forerunner of mens Apostacy from Christ; For, the said non-conformity is a great and manifest schisme in the Catholick Church, & schisme (as we know by heavy experience) produceth Heresie; and Heresie (without GOD's extraordinary preventing Grace) endeth in Apostacy. Fourthly, It condemnes and casteth dirt on the face of the pure, ancient, Apostolick Churches. Fifthly, it is directly against the Solemne League and Covenant, which obligeth every one in his place and calling to act according to the Word of GOD, and the example of the best Reformed Churches. & Sixthly, It is an argument of superstition; For to accompt dayes holy or unholy in

See our 4th Session.

See Section 5.

* Aug. de Civitat. Dei lib. 10. cap. 4.

& Hæretici plerumque sunt Schismatici, & vicissim Schismatici plurimū sunt Hæretici. Polan. Synag. Theol. l. 7c. 12. s Article 1.

themselves is equally superstitious. Seventhly, It teaches disobedience unto, at least a neglect of, the Magistrates power in matters Ecclesiasticall: For who will or can thinke himselfe bound to any Ordinances of men, When those dayes which have been established by all States and Churches, that ever owned the title CHRISTIAN, shall be laid aside. Eighthly, It is a contempt of *Universall Tradition*; which hath ever been held a *sure marke* of truth, (x) and one of the best testimonies that the Scriptures be the Word of GOD. (u) Yea, we desire our Opponents to consider, that upon no other ground then this of *Universall Tradition*, doe Christians believe that *Matthew, Luke, and John*, wrote those Gospels, in which is declared the *Birth of Christ*: (v) And, if the *Universall Tradition of Gods Church* be a necessary and certain foundation, whereon to build our believe of the said Gospels from which we have the relation of *Christs Birth*; It must likewise be yielded, that *Universall Tradition* is as certain a foundation, whereon to build our believe, that *Christ was borne on the 25. day of Decemb.* and that that day is to be yearly celebrated by all Christians in memory thereof; For both these are no lesse assured unto us by *Universall Tradition*, (s) then the former. Lastly, it is an inlet to all confusion and disorder in the Churches of Christ; For if nothing must be admitted, but what hath Speciall Scripture warrant, either in expresse termes or by sound consequence; (w) Then it followes undeniably that the *Lords day* and all set dayes of GODS Worship, set Fast dayes, set Lectures, daily prayers with our Families, singing one Psalm all together, & erecting Churches, Parochiall Congregations, publique catechizing of youth, asking Banes, & the Ministers solemnizing of Matrimony, Exhortations at burials, must not be admitted; for none of these nor many things more, now in practice among us, have any speciall Scripture warrant at all.

In vaine therefore it is and most absurd, for You, our Opponents to charge us with *bes fooling and misleading the people*: Your own Practice, Your own Doctrines shall bear witness betwixt us. You, who perswade, That *Adam kept the Sabbath* in the State of Innocency, (y) that he sung *Dauids Ninety second Psalmes* on that day, (z) that GOD Himselfe preached, and some of you undertake to know what were the Doctrines of His Sermon. (a) Do you not beseech and mislead the people?

You, who say one while, That GOD did not appoint THE
seventh

z) Vincent. Lyrinens. contra Hæres. cap. 3.
u) Bucan. loc. com. 4. q. 13.
Hooker Eccl. Pol. lib. 4. §.
v) Mat. 1. 18.
Luk. 2. 7.
John 1. 14.

s) See our 5th and 6th Sect.

w) See Quære 3. & 4.

x) Bucan. loc. com. 4. 3. n. 10.

y) The Pract. of Piety, Printed by R. Y. p. 183.

z) Dies Dominica. lib. 1. c. 8.

a) Du Baras, in the seventh day of the first week.

seventh day, the day on which he rested to be kept holy, but A seventh day; and so one day of seven be observed, no matter which of them. b Another while, That by this Commandment God enjoynes us to keep holy the first day of the week on which he began his work of Creation. c Do you not beseege and mislead the people?

You who (forgetting your own Doctrine of the fourth Commandment) Do teach, That the keeping holy the first day of the week or Lords day was appointed and practised by Christ and his Apostles; d Yet cannot produce so much as one Example for it, much lesse a Precept. Do you not beseege and mislead the people?

You, who inferre, because S. Paul, and the Disciples at Troas spent the whole night of the first day of the week in praying, preaching, and heavenly conference, in regard he was to leave them and depart on the morrow; e THEREFORE S. Paul and the Disciples at Troas met that night to keep holy the day past; f THEREFORE the Disciples at Troas met every first day of the week to keep the day holy, g THEREFORE the Church at Philippi, the Church in Cilicia, and all Christian Churches did then keep holy the first day of the week; THEREFORE all the Apostles did constantly keep holy that day; THEREFORE Christ and his Apostles appointed the first day of the week to be forever celebrated, in stead of the Sabbath; h Is not this pitifull Logick? Doe you not beseege and mislead the people?

You, who tell stories of an old Sabbath and a new Sabbath, a Jewish Sabbath and a Christian Sabbath, a Sabbath of the seventh day, and a Sabbath of the first day of the week; i That so you may only fixe the name Sabbath on the Lords day, and then perswade the simple & ignorant that all those Texts of Scripture wherein mention is made of the Sabbath day, are intended of the Lords day: When indeed to call the Lords day the Sabbath is as senselesse as to call Sunday Saturday, or the first day the last day of the week: k When throughout the Old and New Testament we have not the least intimation of any other weekly Sabbath, save the old, Jewish, seventh day Sabbath: l When you your selves confesse, that, the Name Lords day is more proper and particular, and lesse obvious to exception, then the Name Sabbath; m And that the name Sabbath is in dignity inferiour to both Lords day and Sunday; n Doe you not beseege and mislead the people?*

You that condemne the yeerly Observation of Christs Birth

*b R. Byfield in his Doctrine of the Sabbath, p. 116. 117. c R. Byfield ll. dd. p. 117. 118. 136. Marindale of the Sabbath, p. 4. Scudder, in his Christians daily walk c. 6. d D. Twisse in his Christian Sabbath. p. 10. Scudder in his Christians daily walk. c. 6. p. 158 Dies Dominica. lib. 1. cap. 7. e A. 20. 6, 7. 11 f The Pract. of Piety, printed by R. T. p. 289. Dies Dominica. lib. 1. cap. 2. g Dies Dominica. dd. ll. h R. Byfield, in his Doctrine of the Sabbath. pag. 118. The Pract. of Piety, Printed by R. T. p. 288. Dies Dominica. l. 1. c. 7. i Lee, Sunday a Sabbath. p. 103. 144. 146. * As, Exod. 31. 14, 15. and 35. 2. 3. Lev. 23. 3. Neh. 13. 15. 16. 17, 19. 21. Isa. 58. 13. &c. k Cui res nomini subiecta negatur, nomine illu-*

*day diu. Da
ve-*

nant. ad Pre-
tern. Commun.
inter Euangel.
Eccles. ad horsa-
ria. cap. 4. p. 64.
I See our Anf.
to Hemings 9th
Quere.
m Lec. Sunday
a Sabbath, pag.
183. 185.
n Leell dd.
p. 182.
o R. Byfield.
in his Doctrine
of the Sabbath.
p. 134.

p 2 Tim 3. 13.

q 2 Thes. 2. 11.

day as Heathenish; Yet acknowledge this Feast to be a Consti-
tution of the ancient Primitive Church. o Doe you not bespoe
and misleade the people?

Take ye heed, these are not small matters: Consider well with
your selves what it is to stand guilty before GOD of *belying*
Christ and his Apostles, of wilful *wresting the Holy Scriptures*, of
despising *Christs Church*, of introducing *Judaisme*, of *faction*, of
perjury and Vow-brewking, of *railing*, *seducing*, *spirituall pride*, and
other abhominable sins which ever accompany those who by de-
ceit and untruths do thinke to advance the Honour and Services
of GOD. Be advised; take time while time is to repent of those
notorious *slanders* wherewith you have aspersed the ancient
approved wayes of GODS Worship; and let the sincerity of
your Repentance appeare by the speedy abandoning of your
Schismaticall unchristian *practices and principles*; lest the heavy
judgement of *seducers*, to waxe worse and worse, p fall upon you,
and GOD in the end deliver you up to such strong delusions that
you should believe your owne lyes. q

Q U E R E XVI.

Whether in case you returne no answer to the Queres, I have not ground
sufficient to conclude you utterly unable to give a rationall account of your
practice, now put upon it?

A N S W E R.

Sir, You have an account of our practice, & how rationall it is, we
appeale to your own conscience and the judgement of the Chri-
stian World. Now for conclusion, take here the words of a most
eminent Divine, whose learning & piety hath placed him beyond
exception; There is (saith he) y no day so properly *Christs* as his
Birth-day; which may appeare, if we set it in comparison with other
dayes of most memorable note, as the day of his Passion, Resurrection,
and Ascension: for the day of his Passion, that was not so properly his,
because two thieves suffered with him at the same time, in the same
place, after the same manner: 2 Nor the day of his Resurrection; for
as he rose from the dead, so did others the same day, and went into the
holy City: 2 Nor the day of his Ascension; for Enoch and Elias had
their Ascension too, and that long before his: b But his BIRTH DAY
was his without a fellow; none ever SO borne, none ever born SUCH
a one; and therefore (as no Festivity is besides it) it is attended, as
Christ himselfe, with an Apostolicall retinue of Holy dayes.

Haletin-jah.

y B. Andrews
in his serm.
upon John 8.
ver. 56.

r Luk. 23. 32,
33.
a Mar. 27. 52,
53.
b Gen. 5. 24.
2 Kings 2. 11.

